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# THE DUTCH IN MALABAR

BY

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WITH A FOREWORD BY

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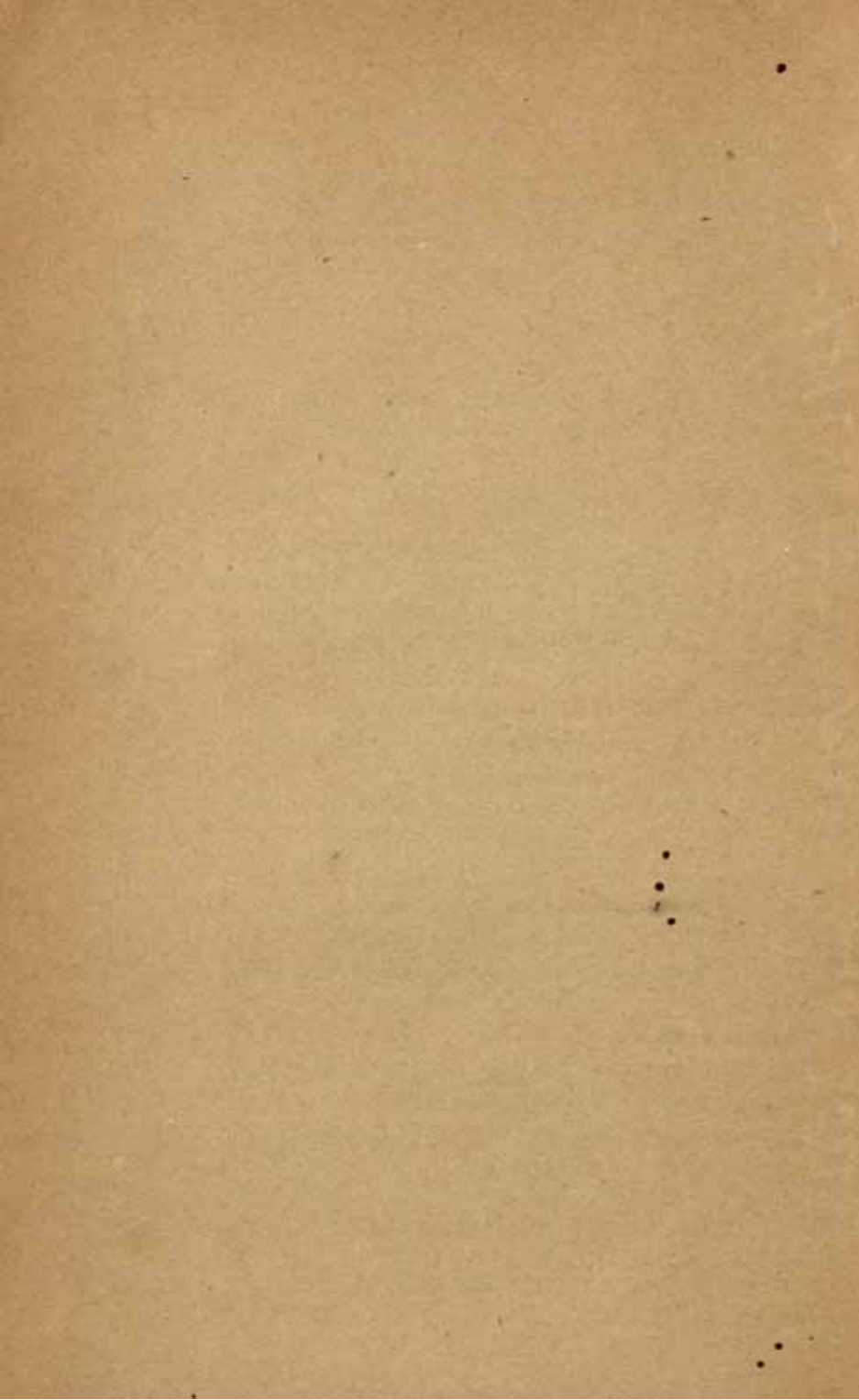
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## FOREWORD

BY

Sir C. R. REDDY, Kt. M. A., (Cantab) Hon. D. Litt. (Andhra)

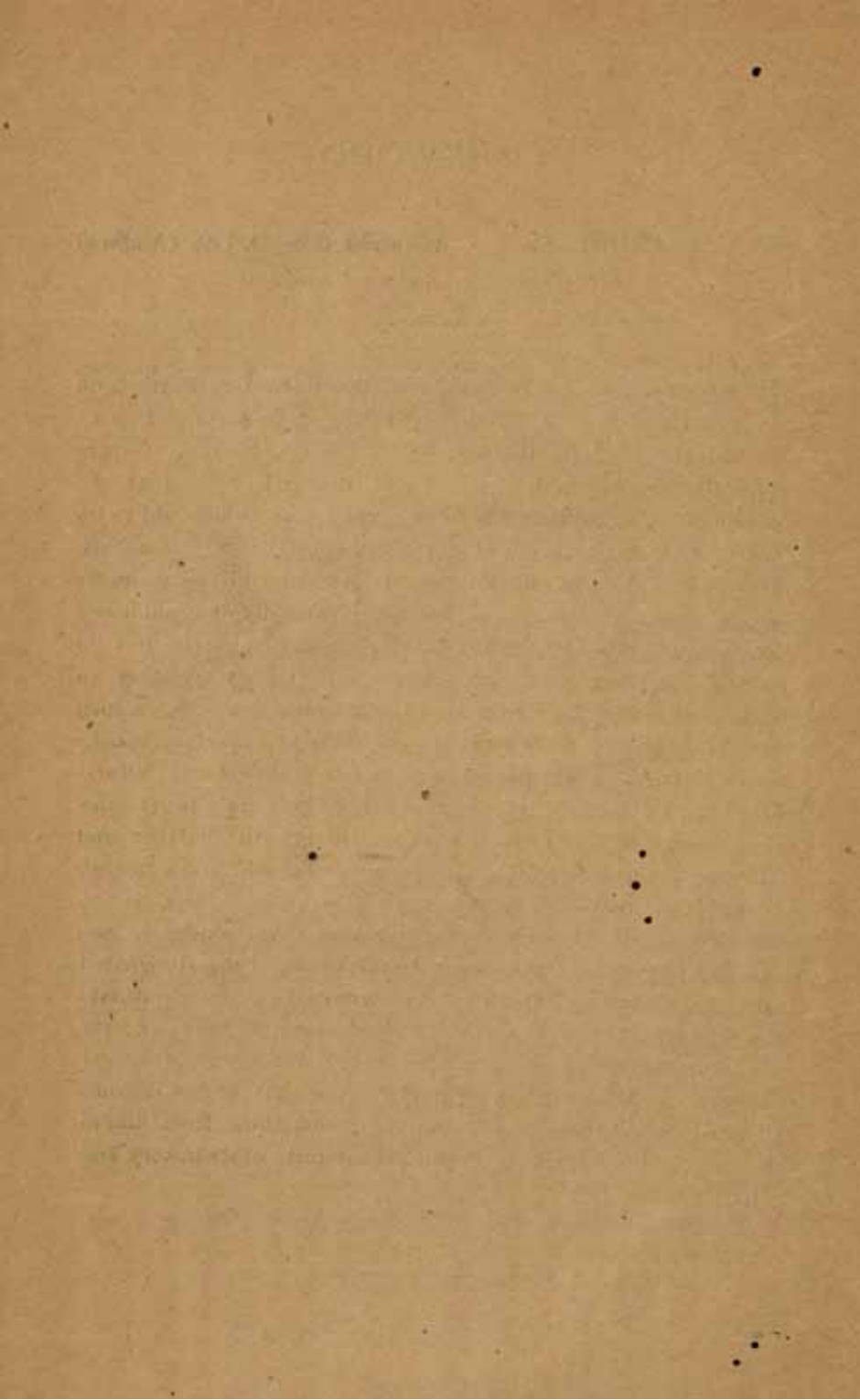
*Vice-Chancellor, Andhra University.*

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I have much pleasure in introducing this learned monograph on "The Dutch in Malabar" by Mr. P. C. Alexander, M.A., M. Litt., Lecturer in History, V. R. College, Nellore. He was formerly an Assistant Lecturer and Research Scholar at the Annamalai University. The book bears traces, which add to its value, of the master hand of Diwan Bahadur C.S. Srinivasachari, Professor of History and Politics, Annamalai University, under whom young Alexander was trained. Naturally, it is published by the Annamalai University. This publication carries out its tradition of research into Dravidian History relating to Vijayanagar and the European Epochs which have thrown such wonderful and accurate light on the facts of important epochs which have left permanent traces on our Political and Cultural history. The book is well documented. There are already some three Publications relating to the History of Malabar and Travancore under Dutch, Portuguese, French and English intervention and domination. Mr. Alexander's book is no superfluity but an essential contribution. No wonder he has been the recipient of the coveted Endowment Prize designated after the illustrious Maharani Setu Parvati Bai. I congratulate the young author on this scholarly and scientific work. I have ambitions for him. I hope this is the precursor of bigger volumes on South Indian History. Now that he has become affiliated to Andhra, may I not expect something from him in the vast field of more than Provincial interest, of its history and culture?

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## PREFACE

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"The Dutch in Malabar" is the thesis I submitted for the M. Litt. degree of the Annamalai University. In this monograph I have attempted to make a detailed study of the relations of the Dutch with Malabar. The Dutch were masters of the Cochin fort from 1663 to 1795; this period witnessed many important events which radically altered the history of the country. When the Dutch arrived on the Malabar Coast, the country was divided into about fifty small principalities; but by the close of the 18th century Malabar had come to be divided into three main units—Calicut, Cochin and Travancore. Thus the Dutch epoch in Malabar saw the end of the middle ages and the beginning of the modern. It would be an exaggeration to say that the Dutch played an important part in shaping the history of Malabar during this period. Their role, no doubt, was something more than that of mere spectators. But their political influence was not strong enough to enable them to play an active part in the politics of the country. Due importance is given in this book to the important political events of this period. I have attempted to make a study of the social and economic conditions and the administrative system of Malabar during this period. I have also discussed the administrative, economic and religious policy of the Dutch in Malabar, their trade and their administrative system.

There is no paucity of material for research in this subject. The texts of the numerous letters exchanged between the Dutch and the Malabar princes and the treaties concluded by them are available in Malayalam. The Memoirs left by the Dutch Commanders,—especially those of Moens and Gollennesse—the Letters of the Dutch Chaplain Visscher, and the accounts of foreign travellers are rich mines of information for our study.



I must express my thanks to Diwan Bahadur Professor C. S. Srinivasachariar for his valuable guidance and help. I had the benefit of his guidance for five years for preparing my theses for the M. Litt. and the D. Litt. degrees of the Annamalai University on subjects relating to Kerala History, and I owe him a deep debt of gratitude. Sir C. R. Reddy M.A., (Cantab) D. Litt., Vice-Chancellor, Andhra University, has conferred on me a great distinction by writing a Foreword to my book. It is a distinction which my book hardly deserves. I am thankful to the authorities of the Annamalai University for sanctioning the publication of this book.

NELLORE, }  
15-8-1946. }

P. C. ALEXANDER

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## INTRODUCTION

"The Dutch in Malabar" is the result of two years of research conducted by Dr. P. C. Alexander during the years when he was a member of the staff of the History Department of the Annamalai University. He was awarded the M. Litt. Degree of the University for this thesis in 1943 and the University kindly sanctioned its publication on the recommendation of the examiners.

The importance of the Dutch epoch in the history of Malabar can be hardly exaggerated. The Dutch wrested the fort of Cochin from the Portuguese in 1663 and thus became the inheritors of the political supremacy exercised by the Portuguese in the kingdom of Cochin. The Rajas of Cochin had entered into political alliance with the Portuguese to escape from the humiliating tutelage of the Zamorins of Calicut. But the Portuguese never recognised the Sovereign status of the Cochin Rajas and frequently interfered in their internal administration. During the one hundred and fifty years of Portuguese rule at Cochin they consolidated their position in the country and virtually gained control of the rulers. When the fort of Cochin was seized by the Dutch, the kingdom of Cochin became a dependency of theirs. The frequent disputes of succession in Cochin and the rebellions of local chieftains weakened the position of the Cochin rulers who were forced to rely entirely on the protection of the Dutch. The installation of the Mootha Tavazhi Prince on the throne of Cochin by the Dutch Commander in 1663 is indicative of their power. The famous "War of the Vellom succession" confirmed the position of the Dutch as kingmakers in Cochin. It now became clear that no candidate could have any prospect of ascending the throne of Cochin without the support of the Dutch. By undertaking the administrative responsibilities in Cochin, the Dutch were committing themselves to the great task of safeguarding the integrity of a weak kingdom. The Dutch tried their best to discharge their responsibilities towards Cochin. Their policy however brought considerable loss to the Company and the Dutch authorities soon perceived that the Rajas of Cochin should no longer be supported by them.



During the first phase of their relations with Malabar, the Dutch had very little to do with the state of Travancore. When the Dutch arrived on the Malabar coast, Travancore was a very small principality. It was under the great Maharaja Marthanda Varma that Travancore came to the forefront of Malabar politics. The most important event in the history of Malabar in the 18th century was the rise of Marthanda Varma. His military and political achievements affected the position of all powers in Malabar, including the Dutch. The Dutch tried to thwart the schemes of Marthanda Varma by resorting to the clever policy of setting the Malabar Rajas against him. But finding their attempts useless they decided to cultivate his friendship and signed a treaty with him (Treaty of Mavelikkara 1753). This treaty clearly marked the decline of Dutch influence in the country. A good feature of Dr. Alexander's book is his account of the policy of Marthanda Varma. The great achievement of Marthandavarma was the destruction of the old feudal nobility and the establishment of a powerful and efficient autocracy. The Maharaja's activities have been severely criticised by some authors, the most notable among them being Sardar K. M. Panikker. Dr. Alexander differs from Mr. Panikker and defends and justifies the Maharaja's policy and aims.

The relations of the Dutch with the Zamorins of Calicut have not always been friendly. When the Dutch established their power in Cochin, the most powerful of the princes of Malabar was the Zamorin of Calicut. The Zamorin had been the traditional enemy of the Portuguese and so he has prepared to enter into an alliance with the Dutch. But soon he found that the Dutch were thwarting his aims of conquest of Cochin. The Zamorins and the Dutch drifted into open war over the question of the possession of Chettwaye and thus the relations between the two powers were always strained.

The invasions of Malabar by Hyder Ali and Tipu sultan had important reactions on the fortunes of the Dutch. Dr. Alexander has dealt with these in great detail in Chapters VII and VIII. The Dutch had hardly recovered from the great blow they had sustained by their treaty with Travancore, when the Mysoreans

attacked Malabar. The Dutch had treaty obligations to save the kingdom of Cochin from foreign attack. But their position was so weak that they could hardly fulfil their obligations. In fact their anxiety now was not to save Cochin or any of their allies, but to save themselves. The Mysorean invaders were fully aware of the weakness of the Dutch.

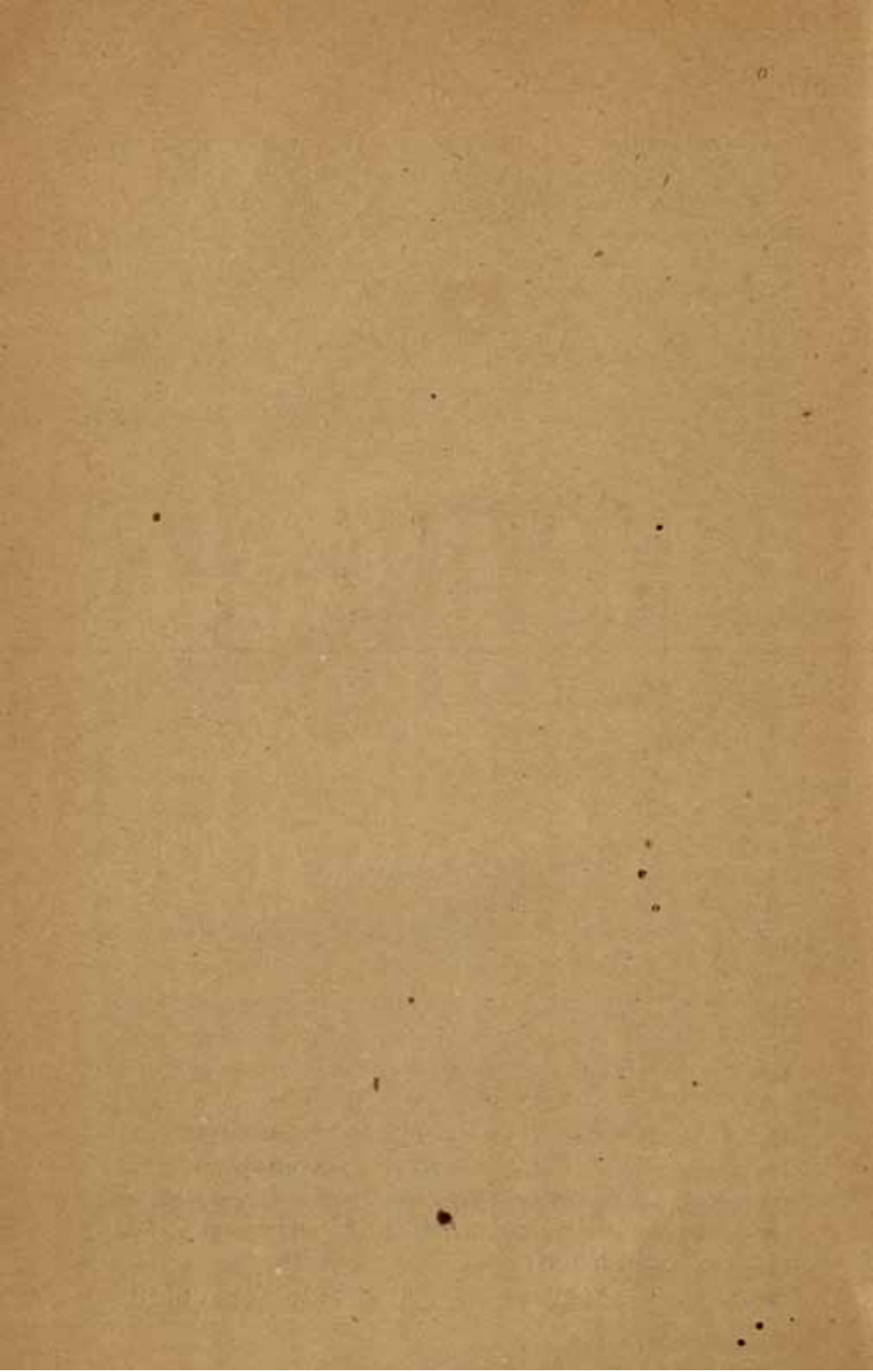
By the close of the 18th century the Dutch had practically lost all power in Malabar. It was not a difficult task for the English to seize power from their hands. The author has aptly described the destruction of Dutch power in Malabar when he says "Marthanda Varma dealt the death blow to the Dutch Company, the Mysoreans hastened its death, the English effected it."

A special merit of Dr. Alexander's book is that he has devoted great attention to the study of the political and social conditions of Malabar in the 18th century and the policy, trade and administrative system of the Dutch. By devoting special chapters for these topics, the author has made his book very informative and useful to all students of Kerala history. In Chapter XI he has elaborately dealt with the Nairs, the Syrian Christians, the Jews and other important communities in Malabar. Chapter XII describes the administrative system prevalent in Travancore, Cochin and Calicut and gives many useful details about the revenue and judicial administration of Malabar in general. When the author discusses the policy of the Dutch in Malabar—administrative, economic and religious—he makes very useful observations. The contrast which the author draws between the Dutch and the Portuguese is instructive.

I recommended this subject to the author for his study as I was convinced that his knowledge of Malayalam would enable him to make full use of the many documents relevant to this subject in that language. The texts of the letters exchanged between the princes of Malabar and the Dutch Commanders which are available in Malayalam have been properly utilised for marshalling the necessary data for this thesis. I trust that this useful and informative monograph will be an important contribution to Kerala history.

13th August 1946.

C. S. SRINIVASACHARI.





# ERRATA

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Page	Line	For	Read
18	33	beseiged	besieged
21	18	Seige	siege
22	32	beseigers	besiegers
23	n 2; 4	reaty	treaty
25	21	Hutstaart	Hustaart
29	29	Declan	Deelan
45	10	Porakad	Porakkad
54	20	Anjenco	Anjengo
63	20 & 23	Panikar	Panikker
64	17	<i>Sin qn non</i>	<i>Sine qua non</i>
67	4	in	In
69	n 1; 5	hatman	hatmen
73	4	De Llanoy	De Lannoy
76	10	Chranganore	Cranganore
77	23	treasuries	treasures
79	21	new	knew
82	n 1; 10	Archeological	Archæological
84	25	harrass	harass
96	3	off	of
103	21	remined	remained
106	33	interest	interests
109	9	the Travancore	Travancore
111	n 2;	Sankuning	Sankunny
115	29	Anglebeck	Angelbeck
123	20	temperal	temporal
125	22	Kolachel	Colachel
128	31	adress	address
131	29	the Zamorin	to the Zamorin
137	16	seige	siege
144	24 & 25	Desavazhi	Desavazhi
144	31	soldies	soldiers



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150	8	teack	teak
153	14	Articles	Article
155	20	of	or
159	2	reagained	regained
160	34	errect	erect
192	21	restrictions	restriction
205	5	rase	rise
205	19	below	blow
206	10	Vorsbury	Vorsburg

# THE DUTCH IN MALABAR

## CHAPTER I

### A. MALABAR ON THE EVE OF THE ADVENT OF THE DUTCH.

THE name 'Malabar' in its wider sense is applied to the Malayalam-speaking territories of South India, comprising the two native states of Travancore and Cochin and the British District of Malabar. In its narrower sense it is applied only to the British District of that name. The origin of the name has given rise to much speculation. It is interesting to note that the name 'Malabar' by which the country is commonly referred to in the writings of foreign travellers and authors, is rarely used in indigenous literature. Al Biruni seems to have been the first to refer to the country by this name. In the writings of the early travellers we find different variations of the word Malabar; for example 'Manibar', 'Minibar', 'Melibar', 'Mulaibar', etc. 'Malabar' is certainly not an indigenous word, even though the first part of it, 'Mala' may be considered as the Dravidian term for mountain. Some scholars have suggested the possibility of the derivation of the suffix 'bar', from the Arabic 'barr', which means a continent. It can also be taken as a variant of the Sanskrit 'vara', which means a region; thus 'Malabar' is considered to have been derived from 'Malavaram'. But we have rarely come across any reference to the country as 'Malavaram' in Sanskrit literature. In the Keralolpathi we find the country being frequently referred to as 'Malanadu'. 'Malanadu' (Malayalam) or 'Malainadu' (Tamil), literally means the hill country. Probably Malabar is a variant of the indigenous term 'Malanadu'.

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1 The word Malanadu is used to refer not only to Malabar, but to the adjoining districts also. Thus the 'Malakuta' of Yuan Chwang's accounts has been identified with 'Malainadu' which includes the Malayalam-speaking countries on the west coast and the modern districts of Tanjore, Madura and Coimbatore.

'Malayalam' is invariably used to refer to the language of the country. But it denotes the territory also. It is composed of the two words 'Mala' (hill) and 'alam' (depth) or 'ala' (wave). 'Malankara' is another name by which the country is known<sup>1</sup>. It may be interpreted to mean 'Mala' (hill) and 'Kara' (shore) or as 'Malayala Kara'.

'Kerala' is the name which the Malayalees like most for their country. But it came to be applied to the country only since the advent of the Aryans<sup>2</sup>. The original name of the country was 'Chera'<sup>3</sup>; and it is by this name that it is referred to in the various classics of the Tamil literature. Dr. Caldwell was inclined to think that 'Kerala' was the original form of the word and that 'Chera' was derived from 'Kerala'. But there is a greater possibility for the word 'Kerala' to have come from 'Chera'. Scholars like Rev. Foulkes and Dr. Gundert point out that 'Keralam' is the Canarese dialectical form of the word

Ref: "Ancient Geography of India" by General Cunningham  
P. 629.

"Malakutta of Yuan Chwang" by Prof. K. A. N. Sastri in the  
Proceedings of the Oriental Conference, 1930. P. 176.

Naladyar Introduction by Dr. Pope. P. X.

Indian Antiquary Vol. XVIII. PP. 239-242.

South Indian Inscriptions " Vol. I. Part 1. P. 2. Note 1.

1. 'Malankara' does not seem to have been a very common name. Generally it is found in the religious literature of the Syrian Christians. The Archbishop of the Syrian Christians of Malabar is styled as 'Malankara Metropolitan'.

2. The name Kerala has had a long usage. The Mahabaratha, the Ramavana, the Vayupurana, the Matsya and Markandeya Puranas make mention of Kerala. The famous Rock Edict of Asoka (R. E. II) refers to the ruler of Kerala as 'Kerala Putra'. The *Periplus* refers to the ruler of Kerala as 'Cerabotra'. The 'Cerabotra' of the *Periplus* and the 'Caelobotra' of Pliny have been correctly identified with the 'Keralaputra' of the Asokan edicts.

3. Prof. P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar says that the name of the country in its original form of 'Chera' occurs in the Tittiriya Aranyaka as 'Chera padah'. But this interpretation is not accepted by scholars as Sayana uses the word Chera to mean snake and not the country of Chera.



'Cheram'.<sup>1</sup> Some scholars contend that 'Keralam' is derived from 'Keram', the name of the cocoanut palm which grows luxuriantly in the country. But it seems more probable to accept that 'Keram' is derived from the Dravidian root Cheram.

Malabar had never been a single political unit in any period of her history. Of course tradition speaks of political unity in the days of the Perumals; but a student of history has genuine doubts whether the country at any time had been brought under unified control by any Perumal. When the Dutch arrived on the Malabar coast, there were as many as forty-six petty chieftains and four ruling houses in the country. Tradition ascribes the origin of their autonomy to Cheraman Perumal, the last of the Perumals, who is said to have partitioned his empire among his relatives and dependents and gone on a pilgrimage to 'Mecca'.<sup>2</sup> The authenticity of this tradition is questioned by many historians. There is ample evidence to show that these dynasties and principalities were in existence long before the alleged division of the country by Cheraman Perumal. Probably the story about the partition of Cheraman Perumal's dominions was invented in later centuries as a convenient explanation for the state of affairs in the country.

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1 To prove that roots and words beginning with the palatal consonant C change into the guttural consonant K in Canarese, the following examples may be given:—

Tamil	Canarese
Cey (to do)	Key
Cevi (ear)	Kivi
Ceri (a hamlet)	Keri
Centamarai (red lotus)	Kendavara
Chennir (red water, blood)	Kennir

<sup>2</sup> "Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiar Commemoration Volume", 1941. Article on "Ceranadu and Tamil" by Vidwan S. Arumugha Mudaliar, p. 131.

2. The story of Cheraman Perumal's partition of the empire and pilgrimage to Mecca is one of the unsolved puzzles of Kerala history. We find the story of the Perumal's conversion in Malayalam works like the Keralolpathi, in Mohommedan accounts like the 'Tohfut al Mujahideen', in foreign accounts like the Joint Commissioner's Report and Letters of Visscher and in Tamil Classics like the Peria Puranam. These accounts disagree fundamentally in many details, even though they all agree in saying that Cheraman was the last

The leading princes of Malabar when the Dutch arrived in the country were the Rajas of Travancore and Cochin, the Zamorin of Calicut and the 'Kolathiri' or Raja of Chirakkal.<sup>1</sup>

Travancore was only one among the many small kingdoms of the south. North of Travancore lay the minor principalities of Attingal, Peritally, Desinganadu, Maruthu Kulangara, Kayamkulam, Porakkad, Punjar, Tekkumkur, Vadakkumkur and Idappally. The Portuguese influence had never been strong in Travancore; in fact Travancore had never been under the influence of any power in any period of her history. Even though the small principalities lying between Travancore and Cochin were enjoying a status of independence, Travancore was exercising considerable control over them. Many of them were ruled by princes related to the royal house of Travancore. Even the others had no fear of annexation by Travancore. Inter-statal wars were a regular feature of political life in medieval Malabar, but conquests never led to annexation. The most important events which radically changed the political character of Malabar during the hundred years of Dutch rule in the country were the annihilation of these principalities by Travancore and the rise of Travancore as the predominant power in Malabar.

of the Perumals. It is interesting to note that almost all the religious sects known to South India—Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Jainism, Christianity, Saivism—have claimed Cheraman as their convert. Latest researches into this subject prove that Cheraman never embraced any foreign religion, but died a Saivite.

1 The Royal family of Travancore was known as Trippappil Swaroopam, that of Cochin as Perimpadappu Swaroopam, that of Calicut as Nediyyiruppu Swaroopam and that of Chirakkal as Kolathu Swaroopam. It was by these names that the Rajas used to refer to each other in their correspondence.

According to the popular traditions of the country, Cheraman Perumal gave the northern part of his dominions to the Kolathiri when he partitioned his empire. The Kolathiri was crowned as the 'lord of Kerala'. If the Perumal was to return after his pilgrimage, the Kolathiri was to become his 'Ilamkur' (heir-apparent); if he did not return he was to have Cheraman's crown. The southern portions of the empire were given to the Raja of Travancore and the central regions to the Raja of Cochin. When the Zamorin came to meet the Perumal, the latter had only one "Desam" to give him. But the Perumal gave him his sword with the blessing that he may "die, kill and seize" and make himself master of all Malanadu.



Cochin was the chief port on the Malabar coast. It had passed into the hands of the Portuguese very early in the 16th century. Nearly a century and a half of Portuguese administration of the port had raised it to the status of one of the predominant centres of trade in the East. Baldaeus says that Cochin could compare well with some of the best ports of Europe and could "justly challenge the second place after Goa among the Indian cities". Before Goa was constructed, Cochin was the official residence of the Portuguese Viceroy. The port extended to a mile and a half in length and a mile in breadth. Caesar Frederick, a Venetian merchant who visited Malabar in the latter half of the sixteenth century, describes Cochin as the "chiefest place that the Portugals have in the Indies next unto Goa".

The native kingdom of Cochin extended from Porakkad in the south to Chettwaye in the north.<sup>1</sup> The cardinal point of interest in Malabar politics before the advent of the Europeans was the keen hostility between the two kingdoms of Cochin and Calicut. The Zamorin of Calicut was the most powerful of the princes of Malabar. His ambition was to subdue the whole of Malabar with the assistance of the foreign Mohomedans with whom he was on friendly terms. The history of Cochin's independence is a very chequered one; in fact Cochin had never enjoyed an uninterrupted period of independence. Duarte Barbosa says that before the arrival of the Portuguese the Raja of Cochin was not considered as a sovereign at all<sup>2</sup>. The Zamorins of Calicut had made it a regular custom to invade Cochin and enforce their

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1. Of the possessions of Cochin Visscher mentions 'Moutan', 'Coeronad', 'Vypeen', 'Cranganore', and 'Iyloor'. 'Moutan' is identified with 'Mattam' and 'Coernad' with 'Kurunadu'. Both these territories were later conquered by the Raja of Travancore. Cranganore was situated at the southern end of the Chettwaye island. It was the famous capital of the Chera rulers—known as Kodungallur in Malayalam literature, as 'Muziris' in the writings of early western travellers, as 'Muyirikkodu', 'Muchiri' and 'Makotai Patta-am' in Tamil books and inscriptions and as 'Vanji' in the Sangam classics. It had its lost independent status and was always under the protection of either the Raja of Cochin or the Zamorin of Calicut. Iyloor was a small principality lying between Cranganore and Chettwaye.

2. Barbosa says that the Cochin Raja could neither coin money, nor even roof his house with tiles. 'Description of the coasts of Africa and Malabar', P. 156.



supremacy on the Cochin rulers. The latter had to send pepper and spices to the Mohommedan merchants at Calicut with whom the Zamorins had entered into commercial contracts. This had affected adversely the trade of Cochin; but the Rajas of Cochin were too weak to oppose the policy of the powerful Zamorin.<sup>1</sup>

When the Portuguese arrived on the Malabar coast the Cochin Raja readily entered into an alliance with them hoping that he could extricate himself from the humiliating tutelage of Calicut. But it was a fall from the frying pan into the fire. From the very beginning of Portuguese relations with Malabar, they treated the Cochin Rajas as their vassals. They considered Cochin as one of their dependencies and in all their correspondence with the Raja they used to address him as their "faithful servant". The Portuguese Governors at Cochin never showed even the ordinary courtesies due to a king in their dealings with him. In 1510 the Portuguese interned the Raja in his palace on the slightest provocation. The Raja was not allowed even to retire. Once Albuquerque openly told the Raja that it was the will of Portugal and not the custom of Cochin that was binding on Cochin. The Raja was deprived of even the taxes which were legitimately due to him. His complaints were treated with contempt, and whenever he remonstrated, he was reminded of his dependent position. During the century and a half that the Portuguese Captains exercised their authority in the fortress of Cochin, the Rajas of that territory were virtually prisoners.<sup>2</sup>

Calicut, as we have already pointed out, was the wealthiest and the most powerful of the four kingdoms of Malabar. There was an extensive cultivation of pepper in the Zamorin's dominions and this had attracted foreign merchants to Calicut. The relations of the Zamorins with the Portuguese were never friendly, because the Portuguese had always thwarted the Zamorins' schemes of southern conquest.

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1. For a detailed account of Cochin's dependent position see "Cochin and the European Powers" by P. C. Alexander, thesis which was awarded the Sethu Parvathi Bai Historical Research Prize of 1944 by the Annamalai University.

2. Malabar and the Portuguese K. M. Panikkar P. 165.

The 'Kolathiri' or the Raja of Chirakkal was the weakest of the four Rajas of Malabar. Formerly Chirakkal had been an important centre of trade in pepper, cardamom and sandal wood. But the influence of the Kolathunadu Swaroopam steadily declined and Chirakkal ceased to be an important power in Malabar. The three major powers of Malabar on the eve of the advent of the Dutch were Calicut, Travancore and Cochin.<sup>1</sup>

### B. The first Dutch settlements in Malabar.

By the close of the sixteenth century Holland had become a formidable rival for the Catholic kingdoms of Spain and Portugal. For nearly a century, the Portuguese had been enjoying the monopoly of the Eastern trade, unquestioned by the Christian powers of Europe. All intruders beyond Lisbon to the south were treated as pirates, and misleading reports were spread about the dangers of the route to discourage adventurous navigators. But the union of the Spanish and the Portuguese crowns in 1580 brought about a great change in the situation. Portugal was now dragged at the heels of Spain into her struggle with Protestantism, and the Protestant countries of Holland and England were emboldened to openly challenge the Catholic monopoly. The union of the two Catholic crowns in 1580 was as important to the Protestant countries of the sixteenth century as the closing of the Eastern land routes by the Turks had been to Christendom in the fifteenth<sup>2</sup>. In the case of Holland her newly achieved independence was an additional stimulus for maritime enterprises. Soon a life and death struggle for supremacy followed between the Catholic Kingdoms and Holland. In 1585 Phillip II ordered the seizure of all Dutch ships in Spanish waters. The States-General retaliated by forbidding Dutch vessels to trade with

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1. Besides the princes of Travancore, Cochin, Calicut and Chirakkal there was a Mohammedan chief in Malabar who enjoyed sovereign status. He was the 'Adi Raja' or 'Ali Raja' of Cannanore. He obtained possession of the Laccadive Islands (known as the "Islands of Malabar") and styled himself as the Sultan of the Laccadives. His political influence in Malabar was not very strong and he played only an insignificant part in the politics of the country.

2. History of British India. W. Hunter. Vol I, P 225



Spain or Portugal. Severe penalties were imposed by the States-General on those who attempted to trade with the Catholic Kingdoms. Meanwhile vigorous attempts were being made in Holland to organise an expedition to the East. The Dutch gained much valuable information about the East from a traveller by name John Huyghen Van Linschoten who was a resident at Goa from 1583 to 1589, in the train of the Portuguese Archbishop. When Linschoten returned to his country in 1592, he placed at the service of the States-General the vast store of knowledge which he had gathered during his travels. He obtained a licence from the States-General to publish his work, one part of which setting forth the routes to India, was published in 1595. It had immediate results. Within a few months, a squadron of four ships was despatched under Cornelius Houtman to the East. He returned in 1597 after concluding a treaty with the King of Bantam. Houtman's example was soon followed by many adventurous captains and by 1601 about fifteen fleets consisting of sixty-five ships had sailed to the East. The Dutch Government soon realised the danger of 'separate voyages'. The different companies were already showing signs of mutual jealousy and rivalry and the Government realised that their disunity would lead to their extermination. Meanwhile Philip II had ordered his Indian fleet "to close in on the Hollanders at the Straits of Malacca and to impress whatever private shipping might there be found to aid in their destruction". The Portuguese Government was using its influence with the native princes to shut out the Dutch. The Dutch realised that their strength lay in unity and on the 20th of March, 1602, the various companies were amalgamated under the name "General Chartered East India Company". Those companies which refused to join the United Company were excluded from the trade with the East. The States General granted to the new company the exclusive right of navigation to the East of the Cape of Good Hope and the west of the Straits of Magellan for twenty-one years. It was empowered to make war or peace, to seize foreign ships, to establish colonies, construct forts and to coin money.

The first achievement of the United Company was the routing of the Portuguese near Bantam in 1602. It was followed by a series of successes. In April 1607, they

destroyed the Spanish fleet in Gibraltar. The Dutch ambition in the East was to gain possession of the Spice Islands. The instructions issued to the Dutch Governor-General were that "the commerce of the Moluccas, Amboyna and Banda should belong to the Company and that no other nation in the world should have the least part". In 1619 the Dutch succeeded in establishing their capital at Batavia.

Though most of the early expeditions were sent to the Malay Archipelago, the Dutch had despatched factors to the Indian mainland as early as 1602. Some Dutch factors arrived in Gujarat to see whether trade relations could be established with India. But it is reported that those factors were seized by the Portuguese when they were proceeding from Surat to Calicut. They were taken to Goa and hanged there. In 1603 the Dutch sent a big expedition of 13 ships to the West Coast of India under Steven Van der Hagen. The fleet arrived in the west coast in 1604. Van der Hagen concluded a treaty of alliance with the Zamorin of Calicut on the 11th November 1604. This treaty marks the first connection of the Dutch with Malabar. The treaty refers to the Zamorin as 'Emperor of Malabar'. The main object of this alliance was 'to expel the Portuguese from the territories of His Highness and the rest of India'. The Dutch were also allowed to build a fort at Calicut. The readiness shown by the Zamorin to enter into an alliance with the new-comers for driving out the old ally, shows the weakness of the Portuguese influence in Malabar at that time. Calicut had been the main centre of Portuguese trade; but the relations of the Zamorin with the Portuguese were seldom friendly. There is some truth in the statement of Moens, however strongly prejudiced he was against the Portuguese, that 'as soon as the Portuguese had taken possession of the navigation and trade in these regions, the trade of Calicut decreased and fell into its decline.' The princes of Malabar were aware of the fact that the Portuguese trade in their country was in no way beneficial to them. It was the domination of the Portuguese in the eastern seas that forced them to keep up their trade relations. But, when this was challenged by a stronger power which the Portuguese could not successfully resist, the princes in Malabar were encouraged to turn against their old ally.



The Dutch East India Company succeeded in obtaining footing in other parts of India also. As early as 1602 they had built a factory at Surat. But it was soon destroyed. In 1605 they established a factory at Masulipatam. It was followed by another at Nizampatam in the next year. By 1615 the Company had established many factories on the Coromandel Coast, with Pulicat as their head-quarters.

The Dutch signed a new treaty with the Zamorin on October 16, 1608<sup>1</sup>. It was negotiated by Admiral Peter William Van Hoeven; the object of the treaty was 'the ruin and destruction of the Portuguese together with their associates'. 'Associates' here most probably refers to the 'Perumpadappu Swaroopam'. The Zamorin insisted that the Admiral should besiege the town of Cochin which was at that time in the hands of the Portuguese.

The Dutch had made their position very strong in the Malay Islands and Ceylon before they ventured into Malabar. They captured Malacca from the Portuguese in 1641. They attacked the Portuguese in Ceylon in 1638. The Dutch had obtained a footing in Ceylon as early as 1610. They were strengthening their position there with a view to driving the Portuguese entirely out of the island. The Portuguese power was very weak in Ceylon. They had only 500 Europeans in Colombo at the beginning of its siege by the Dutch, nor was it well fortified. The Dutch compelled Colombo to surrender in May 1656. The Dutch power was further strengthened by the arrival of the Right Worshipful Rijklof Van Goens with a large fleet. By 1658 the Portuguese were driven out of their last stronghold in Ceylon.\* It was easy for the Dutch to attack the Portuguese dominions in Malabar when once they had established their position in Ceylon. From Ceylon the Dutch could carry on their operations against the Portuguese settlements in the West Coast. The town of Quilon was the first object of their attack. Quilon was at that time a great political and commercial centre. The Portuguese had a strong fort there. It was also the seat of the Roman Catholic Bishop<sup>3</sup>. The influence of the Portuguese in Quilon is testified by the English traveller Ralph Fitch who passed by Quilon in 1588.

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<sup>1</sup> October 16, 1608, is the date given by Moens. Mr. Galletti says the correct date is October 13.

Quilon was the seat of the first Roman Catholic Bishopric in India.

He describes Quilon<sup>1</sup> as "a fort of the Portugals from whence commeth great store of pepper which commeth from Portugall." The conquest of Quilon was however no easy task. Admiral Van Goens sailed from Colombo with a small force against Quilon. He managed to seize the Portuguese fortress there on December 29, 1658 (833 M. E.)

From there he proceeded to Cannanore. But Van Goens received orders to undertake no further operations in Malabar and to send back 500 men to Batavia. Therefore, he returned to Colombo. On his way back he stationed a strong garrison at Quilon to guard the fortress they had captured from the Portuguese. But they were immediately attacked by an army of 3000 Portuguese and 1000 Nairs. Finding the defence of the place hopeless, Governor Van der Meyden sailed to Colombo and withdrew the garrison on the 14th April, 1659.

The attempts of the Dutch to capture the Portuguese strongholds in Malabar were renewed in 1660. Van Goens sailed with a small fleet against Malabar. He was joined by a fleet of six ships commanded by Governor Van der Meyden. The Dutch reached Ayacotta on the 10th February, 1661. They signed a treaty with the Zamorin with the object of attacking the Portuguese forts of Palliport and Cranganore. It was agreed to divide the loot equally between the Dutch and the Zamorin if the attempt was to be successful. Among the captives, the Christians were to be entrusted to the Dutch, "Portuguese priests were to be expelled, the forts to be pulled down . . . the Dutch to administer justice, the Dutch to have all pepper at a fixed price except one third which the native chiefs or their merchants should keep for their own trade". The main motive of the Zamorin was to take possession of Cochin with the help of the Dutch. Van der Meyden landed at Palliport on the 15th February, 1661 and attacked the Portuguese fort there. There was only a very weak

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<sup>1</sup> Captain Nieuhoff, the Dutch Director of the East India Company in Quilon, gives the following description about the Portuguese strongholds there. "The city is fortified with a stone wall of eighteen to twenty feet high and eight bastions . . . The Friars of St. Paul and the Franciscans had each a monastery there adorned with stately chapels and steeples. Besides these, there were four other Portuguese Churches here dedicated to as many Romish Saints . . . The castle (the residence of the Portuguese Governor) is the strongest the Portuguese were ever masters of on the coast of Malabar."



garrison of 100 to 150 Europeans and 200 Nairs at Palliport. The Portuguese had made arrangements for reinforcements from Cochin, but it was too late when help came. The Dutch took possession of the fort. Meanwhile the Portuguese garrison defending the fort had escaped through the lake. Van der Meyden handed over Palliport to the Zamorin and sailed back to Ceylon. The Portuguese abandoned all ideas of re-capturing the fort of Palliport and concentrated their attention on Cochin and Cranganore. The Dutch were aware of the Portuguese strength in Quilon. Therefore, Governor Van der Meyden had decided to postpone all attempts at the capture of Cochin. The Dutch plan was to consolidate their conquests and strengthen their position before launching an attack against Cochin. But the capture of Cochin had always been the pivot of their plans in Malabar. They knew very well that "once the Portuguese were turned out of Cochin, they were turned out of India"<sup>1</sup>. That was the reason why Van Goens insisted on seizing Cochin. "In every case" he said "even if our nation should make peace with the Crown of Portugal the design on Cochin must be kept in mind"<sup>2</sup>. He wrote to the Governor-General and Council of India about the necessity of seizing Cochin. "If we are so lucky as to defeat them (the Portuguese in Cochin) the whole coast of Malabar and the pepper trade will be ours".

The power of the Dutch in Malabar was steadily ascending and the chiefs and princes were anxious to secure their friendship. When the Dutch were hatching plans for an attack on the Cochin fort, Paliath Achen, the commander-in-chief and the chief minister of Cochin, approached them at Palliport and "placed himself immediately under the Company, surrendered his person, land and subjects to the Company"<sup>3</sup>. He signed a treaty with Van Goens on the 12th of March 1661 on board the 'Muscaat

1 De Weert—(Quoted by K. M. Pannikar in 'Malabar and the Dutch')

2 Batavia Diary, 1661. Quoted by Galletti.

3 Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, commenting on this treaty, says: "This is not a treaty in the usual sense. It is an instruction or request from Paliath Achen, Komi Menon, to the Dutch Company to protect him from danger from the Portuguese and other enemies who have hostile designs against him and his possessions in Vypeen and elsewhere." Mr. Sastri calls this agreement 'a shrewd stroke of business' on the part of Paliath Achen. Refer to his paper 'Some Documents on Cochin History', I. H. R. Commission, Proceedings of Meetings. Vol. XV.

Boom'. Paliath Achen confesses in this treaty that he was in a 'position of embarrassment', 'powerless to save himself and stand against his enemies' and therefore he was compelled to look out for a powerful nation which will maintain and protect his land and subjects. The Company took him under its protection on condition that 'neither he nor his legal successors should ever make a treaty or alliance with the Portuguese directly or indirectly'. This treaty shows the great prestige of the Dutch Company and the desperate position of the Malabar chiefs at that time. The treaty, no doubt, enhanced the prestige and influence of the Dutch in Malabar considerably.

## CHAPTER II

### THE DUTCH OCCUPATION OF COCHIN

THE history of the Dutch relations with Cochin should be studied in the background of the complicated politics of the country. Certain adoptions made in the ruling family of Cochin had given rise to bitter internecine struggles and thrown the state into utter confusion. In the 17th century the Cochin ruling family was divided into five tavazhies<sup>1</sup> or branches. They were (1) Muttatavazhi, (2) Ilaya tavazhi, (3) Muringur, (4) Chazhiyur and (5) Palluritti. Of these five families, the reigning prince Rama Varma was from the Ilaya tavazhi branch. He adopted some princes from the Mutta tavazhi and Palluritti branches as his successors. Two princes<sup>2</sup> were adopted from the Mutta tavazhi branch, and in July 1646, Rama Varma the eldest of these princes became the ruler. Soon quarrels arose between the Mutta tavazhi and Palluritti branches; Vira Kerala Varma of the latter family deposed Rama Varma and drove him out along with his brother with the help of the Portuguese. The members of the banished family secured the support of one of the feudatories of the Zamorin and tried to regain their position. But, they were defeated at a battle which took place at Trichur. The Zamorin immediately took up the cause of the banished princes and made preparations for an attack on Cochin. The throne having again fallen vacant, some princes

<sup>1</sup> Patappattu. Page 2.

<sup>2</sup> Introduction to the Patappattu Oollur S. Parameswara Iyer.



were adopted from the Vettathu family (Tanur) in North Malabar. The Vettom princes were traditional friends of the Portuguese. The anointment of the prince was held in the Portuguese cathedral at Cochin and he was sworn in as the Portuguese King's brother-in-arms. None of the local chieftains or neighbouring princes took part in these ceremonies on the ground that the Vettom family was not so ancient or noble as the Mutta tavazhi. Fr. Sebastiani rightly observes that this adoption was the root cause of all the subsequent troubles in Cochin.

Now there were two principal parties in Cochin, one supporting the Vettom princes and the other supporting the Mutta tavazhi princes. The leading supporter of the Mutta tavazhi princes was the Zamorin. They had also as their allies the Rajas of Vadakkumkur, Thekkumkur and Edappalli. Paliath Achen, the premier chief of Cochin, was secretly helping the exiled princes. The principal supporters of the Vettom princes were, of course, the Portuguese. The princes of Porakkad, Valluvanad and Chempakassery were their other allies.

The Dutch had hitherto taken little part in the affairs of Cochin. They were anxiously waiting for an opportunity to get a foothold there. The influence of the Dutch Company at that time seems to have been very great. The author of the 'Patappattu'<sup>1</sup> describes the Company as a 'mighty elephant' and speaks of the 'big guns, ammunitions and ships' of the Dutch as a great terror to Malabar. On the advice of the Paliam chief, the Mutta tavazhi prince, Vira Kerala Varma, proceeded to Colombo to seek the help of the Dutch. Vira Kerala Varma explained to the Governor General the whole case, specially laying stress on the fact that the Portuguese had been illegally supporting the claims of the usurpers. The Dutch promised immediate help. A conference was held with the Zamorin at Ayacotta and a plan of attack was drawn up. The Zamorin was to attack by land and the Dutch by sea, while the Rajas of Vadakkumkur and Thekkumkur were to lead a simultaneous attack alongside the the river.

The Dutch fleet under Van Goens at Pulicat received orders from Batavia for the campaign on the west coast. He collected a huge fleet numbering about 24 ships from Colombo and other

<sup>1</sup> Patappattu, Page 5.

parts. He was joined by the ships of Commodore Roodhas at Manapare, and the whole fleet arrived at Quilon on the 5th December. The Dutch fleet consisted of nearly 4,000 soldiers including 27 companies of Europeans. The Portuguese offered no resistance. But the Nairs of the queen of Quilon ably resisted the enemy. In the encounter with the Nairs, about 13 Dutchmen were killed and about 30 were wounded, while "the ways and fields were sown with dead Malabarais".<sup>1</sup> The Dutch entered the town which had been abandoned by the Portuguese; they set fire to the palace there and the temple attached to it.

After capturing Quilon, Van Goens sailed for Cranganore.<sup>2</sup>

The Dutch landed at Cranganore on the 2nd January, 1662 and approached the Portuguese town early on the morning of the 3rd. The Zamorin immediately sent an army to help the Dutch, and the Dutch laid siege to the fortress. The Portuguese fortress was under the command of Urbano Fialho Ferreira. The Dutch opened fire against the fortress, determined to storm the town. The author of the 'Patappattu' says that the Dutch commander sent word to the Portuguese garrison that he was determined to have his dinner in the Cranganore Fort on the following day. But, the ceaseless firing of the Dutch seemed to have no results in the beginning. Fr. Sebastião<sup>3</sup> gives an interesting story that the Dutch sent a messenger with a white flag for truce. But, Urbano Ferreira sent back the messenger to tell Van Goens that the fort was full of valuable articles and that if he was very particular to enter the fort, he himself would send him the ladder to scale the walls! This insulting reply infuriated the Dutch and they resolved to seize the fort on any account. The Dutch wanted to find out a vulnerable point in the fort and to attack there. Captain Nieuhoff who was deputed for this task managed to get information about the weak points in the Portu-

<sup>1</sup> Galletti quotes from the accounts of Schouten, the surgeon in the Company's service who accompanied the expedition.

<sup>2</sup> Captain Nieuhoff says "Mr. Van Goens set sail the same day with the ships the 'Walnut tree' and the 'Ulieland' towards Cranganore. Commodore Gotske being to follow with the rest . . . on the 29th we set sail in the ship 'Exchange' to follow the fleet . . . We landed without any opposition except that the enemy discharged some of its great cannons against us from Cranganore, but without any loss on our side".

<sup>3</sup> Sebastião, Bk. 1. Chap XIII.



guese defences and attacked that side on January 15. It is stated that the plans of the Portuguese were betrayed to the Dutch by Paliath Achen who had already signed a treaty with them. The Portuguese fought courageously, but their commandant fell pierced by a wound; and they retired to the Jesuit Church. The Dutch rushed into the Fort and the Portuguese, finding further defence impossible, surrendered. On the Portuguese side about 120 Europeans and many Nairs were killed. The Dutch lost about 70 men among whom were important officers like Poolman, Sobulenburg, Simon Wending and Lieutenant Silvester. The Portuguese had many buildings and churches in Cranganore. Baldaeus says that the Dutch found there a noble College of the Jesuits with a fine library attached to it, a Franciscan church and a stately cathedral adorned with tombs of the Archbishops of the place. Outside the fort there was a seminary belonging to the St. Thomas Christians (Syrian Christians) where many students and priests were studying Syriac. There were in all seven churches in Cranganore. Baldaeus\* says that the town showed traces of Portuguese decadence<sup>1</sup> but from various other accounts he himself gives, Cranganore seemed to have been a flourishing town. Its decadence set in with its conquest by the Dutch. The Dutch at first entrusted it to the local Raja who was to be their vassal.

After the capture of Cranganore, the Dutch forces moved south towards Cochin, subjugating the island of Vypeen on their way. They established their headquarters in a Portuguese church and built a fort called 'New Orange'. Their idea was to bombard Cochin from New Orange. The *morale* of the Portuguese defenders had been considerably shattered by the brilliant victories scored by the Dutch at Cranganore. Bishop Sebastiani says that he received a letter from the Paliath chief asking him to go over to Chennamangalam for some important confidential negotiations. The Portuguese were prepared to recognise the right of the Mutta tavazhi to succeed the Vettom prince in order to avoid an encounter with the Dutch. They were anxious about the fate of the Syrian Catholics in Cochin in the event of a Dutch conquest of the fort. But, before any settlement could be arranged, the Dutch had launched their attack on Cochin<sup>2</sup>.

1 Baldaeus I. Chap. XVIII.

2 Sebastiani II. Chap. XIII.

The Zamorin with his troops advanced to Elankunnappuzha to help the Mutta tavazhi prince. The Mutta tavazhi prince had meanwhile met the Dutch commander on board the ship and promised all possible help. He undertook to supply the Dutch with food materials from the neighbouring districts.

The Portuguese Governor had convened a conference consisting of his officers, the Cochin prince and Goda Varma, the junior prince, to discuss about the steps to be taken for the defence of Cochin. The junior prince advised the Cochin Raja to escape before the enemy advanced, but he was steadfast in his resolve "to fight for the crown and country".

Van Goens landed some miles south of Cochin and marched along the shore to the Church of St. Iago. From there he advanced towards Mattancherry. Vira Kerala Varma had specially requested the Dutch admiral that there should be no indiscriminate slaughter after the capture of the town. He was very anxious that his sister, the old queen-mother, and the Brahmans and the *gosha* women in the fort should suffer no harm. The Dutch pretended to be friends of the natives, and announced that they had come not to hurt them, but only to help them by defeating the Portuguese. But their persuasion was of no avail; and the Nairs put forth a stout resistance<sup>1</sup>.

Baldaeus says that the Nairs were all intoxicated with opium. But their heroism was in vain. All the three Vettom princes were killed in the fight<sup>2</sup>. The Nairs had fortified themselves in a temple very near the palace. But the Dutch attacked them and chased them from there. In the encounter about 400 Nairs were killed and many times their number wounded. Rani Gangadhara Lakshmi, the old queen-mother, took refuge in the temple, but she was taken prisoner and brought before the Dutch general by Hendrik Van Rhede<sup>3</sup> (author of the famous work, 'Hortus Malabaricus'). Van Rhede was instantly promoted to the rank of captain as a recognition of his service.

1 Nieuhoff says "They all appeared in arms against us and several times attacked us like mad men throwing themselves among our ranks though they were sure to die in the attempt and thrusting themselves upon our swords, and spikes not like men, but like wild boars and enraged bears".

2 Tavernier says that four princes were killed. Ref Bk. I, Chapt. XVI.

3 Nieuhoff says "The old Queen would fain have hid herself in a corner of the top of the Pagode, but was found out by Captain Henry Rede and brought into our camp".



When the queen-mother was brought before Van Goens, the Mutta tavazhi prince paid his respects to her. She readily recognised him as the legal prince<sup>1</sup>.

Many Nair chiefs were killed or taken prisoners in the battle<sup>2</sup>.

Goda Varma, the Vettom prince, had escaped to Ernakulam. The Dutch proposed to pursue him and attack his stronghold there. But, meanwhile, the Raja of Chempakassery, a staunch ally of the Vettom prince, had arrived at Ernakulam with reinforcements. When the Dutch heard about this, they gave up the idea of pursuit.

The Dutch now decided to attack the main fortress. Their army was then divided into three companies—one on the southern side under Van Goens, one on the western side under Commodore Isbrand Goskè and one on the eastern side under Commodore Root Bans. The Dutch started bombarding the town from their fortress of New Orange at Vypeen. Captain Was was ordered to rush on the fortress and take it by storm before sunrise on Sunday the 5th February. But he was killed in his attempt and his army retreated in confusion. The siege continued for three weeks during which not a day passed without attacks and sorties. Winter was fast approaching, and the besieging forces were reduced in number to 1400 men. Meanwhile, the Portuguese received reinforcements from their ally, the Raja of Chempakassery. Further five ships arrived from Goa for Portuguese help. The Dutch were badly in need of many war materials, and the outbreak of the monsoon had spoiled their plans. Van Goens thought it better to raise the siege and retire to Batavia. The retreat was effected in such a clever way that the Portuguese came to know of it only after the whole garrison had left. "All night a Dutch constable named Boerdrop had been running about bawling out at the top of his voice words of command such as 'stand', 'halt', 'who is there?'; a friendly Jew in the meanwhile sounded the gong till early vespers; and these tricks put the besieged

1 Fr. Sebastiani says that she was compelled by the Dutch to recognise the Mutta tavazhi prince as heir.

2 The Tirupunthurai Granthavari says that Raghavan Coil was wounded and he escaped and that two Namboodiries of Muriyattitta were carried away by the Dutch on board their ship as prisoners.



off their guard<sup>1</sup>". Van Goens embarked on the night of March 2, leaving garrisons at New Orange, Cranganore and Quilon.

The Portuguese thought that the Dutch had given up their idea of conquering Cochin for good. Therefore, they did not do anything to strengthen their position in the fort. Instead, they sought to wreak their vengeance on the Jews and Konkani who were supposed to be the supporters of the Dutch. Goda Varma immediately returned to Cochin and he was accepted by the local chiefs and nobles as the prince. It was very late in the day when Mutta tavazhi the prince and Paliath Achen came to know of the retreat of the Dutch. They were about to fall into the hands of the Portuguese, but fortunately escaped.

Vira Kerala Varma immediately proceeded to Colombo accompanied by one of the Chaliur princes and Paliath Achen. He represented his grievances to the Governor-General who found fault with the Admiral for returning without installing the prince on the throne. A Dutch fleet was instantly despatched to Cochin. But Vira Kerala Varma died on board the ship on his return journey. On his death the Chaliur prince, Vira Kerala Varma—became the heir to the throne.

When the Portuguese understood that the Dutch were planning a second attack they appealed to Goa for help. They also made busy preparations for strengthening their fort. But the reinforcements sent from Goa did not reach them as the ships that brought them were caught in a tempest near Honore.<sup>2</sup>

The Dutch appeared before Cochin on the 25th October 1662 under General Jacob Hustaart. A Dutch fleet of eleven ships arrived at Palliport from Batavia. Van Goens who was not keeping good health at that time was to proceed with three ships a little later. The Dutch entrenched themselves at the southern end of the island. Meanwhile reinforcements came from Batavia and other parts. Van Goens arrived from Ceylon with a body of native Ceylon troops. Some Konkani troops also arrived from the Dutch settlement of Vingorla. After leaving a small contingent at Vypeen, the Dutch army left for Cochin and landed in the vicinity of the Church of St. Andrews. They took all precautions to prevent supplies reaching the Portuguese from their allies.

1 History of Kerala, Vol I. K. P. P. Menon. P. 195.

2 Ibid.

As soon as the Dutch arrived in Cochin, they offered terms of peace to the Portuguese. The Dutch Governor-General promised to give the Portuguese absolute freedom of religion and trade, provided they would surrender the fort. But the terms were sternly refused by the Portuguese commander Sarmento. Bishop Sebastiani says that the Dutch had sent two captains with a white flag to the Portuguese Governor before the final attack. The Dutch captains were brought inside the fort with their eyes blindfolded so that they might not notice anything about the defences of the fort. But they had admitted a boy also inside the fort who was not blindfolded like the others. The boy made use of that opportunity to study all details of the Portuguese defences. This information was very valuable to the Dutch general.

The Dutch erected batteries under cover of small barricades made of palm-trunks. A battery with four pieces of cannon was erected near the Church of St. John, another was erected near the Church of St. Thomas, a third was erected at Calvetty with seven pieces of cannon. On the whole about 28 guns were employed in this scheme of attack.

The Portuguese constructed a new bastion at Calvetty thinking that the Dutch would attack them at that point. There was an old, half-ruined pepper warehouse, and the Dutch attacked it from the sea on the 31st of December 1662.

Meanwhile, the Raja of Porakkad, the traditional ally of the Portuguese, arrived with a strong Nair contingent and made some attempts to send food supplies to the defenders inside the fort. A serious battle took place at the landing place between the Dutch and the Nairs of Porakkad. The Porakkad troops displayed exceptional heroism, but fresh troops under Captain Ree came to the help of the Dutch and completely routed the Nairs<sup>1</sup>.

The Dutch at last resolved to take the fort by storm directing their attack on the Calvetty side. They sent a frigate to Vypeen to bring the soldiers stationed there. But, on its return voyage the entire frigate was destroyed as it struck against a sand bank. All except ten soldiers were drowned in the sea<sup>2</sup>. The ten who managed to reach the shores fell into the hands of the Portuguese.

1 Cochi Rajya Charitram. Vol. II. K. P. P. Menon.

2 Ibid.



The final assault on Calvetty took place on the 6th of January. Four companies each consisting about 150 men, took part in the attack<sup>1</sup>.

A Dutch army under Captain du Pon succeeded in entering the town on the Calvetty side. The position of the Portuguese was very precarious. Goda Varma and his followers had already deserted the Portuguese and escaped to places of better security. The Raja of Porakkad also had deserted the Portuguese and they were not getting any supplies from any quarters. Still the Portuguese put forth a stout resistance. But it was of no avail. Finally they decided to surrender and sent two commissaries to Van Goens with a white flag. The next morning the Portuguese general, Ignatio Sarmento, delivered the keys of the fort into the hands of the Dutch general.<sup>2</sup>

Among the Portuguese killed was Don Bernardo, the son-in-law, of the Portuguese Governor. The Dutch leader of the assault, Major Du Pon, was wounded in two places; a Dutch captain and two lieutenants died of their wounds. The siege had cost the Dutch 360 men; 300 more lay in the hospital; 500 more were unfit for duty. On the enemy's side 900 had been killed wounded or captured.

The treaty was signed on the 7th January 1663<sup>3</sup>.

1 Tavernier says that the Portuguese got the assistance of 200 Dutchmen who had deserted their army. Their salary for 6½ months had been withheld by the Dutch Government for failure to defend the town of Tonan in Java and they joined the Portuguese to take revenge. But for their help the Portuguese would not have held out for so long a time.—Book I Ch. XVI.

2 Sebastiani says that the town was given up to loot for three days. According to the Bishop the cruelties and atrocities perpetrated by the victorious troops pass all description. But Tavernier gives a different account about the capitulation. "The Portuguese according to the terms of the capitulation, left Cochin with arms and baggages, but as soon as they were outside the gates of the town where the Dutch troops were in order of battle, they were obliged to give up their arms and place them at the feet of the General, with the exception of officers who kept their swords. The General had promised the soldiers the loot of the town, but not being able to keep up his promise for reasons he explained to them, he led to hope that he would pay them six months' wages.

3 28th Dhanu, 838 M. E. (Patappattu) "The date of the document is usually given as 7th January. The entry at the end shows that the terms were negotiated on the 7th and ratified on the 8th". Some Documents on the History of Cochin by K. A. Nilakanta Sastri: I. H. R. Commission Proceedings of Meetings Vol: XV.



The terms were:—

1. The town of Cochin shall be surrendered with all its jurisdictions, old privileges, revenues, lands, with the documents and papers relating thereto and whatever else is held in the name of the King of Portugal, all rights and titles thereto being ceded to the Dutch General or His Worship's representatives.

2. All artillery, ammunition, merchandise, victuals, movable and immovable property, slaves and whatever else there may be, shall be handed over as above.

3. All free persons who have borne arms shall swear not to serve against the Netherlands in India for two years.

4. All the soldiers and others belonging to the army shall march out with flying colours, drums beating, fuses alight, bullets in their mouths and two guns, to a convenient place outside the town and lay down their arms beneath the standard of the General.

5. All true-born unmarried Portuguese shall be conveyed to Europe.

6. All maimed Portuguese and Mestics shall proceed to Goa and may take their bed and bedding and such other articles as the General and his Council may permit.

7. All free Topasses and Canarians (Konkanis) shall remain at the disposal and discretion of the General.

8. The clergy may take with them their images and church ornaments except those of gold and silver.

9. All free persons and all persons belonging to the church now wandering in the country shall, if they be subjects of the king of Portugal, be comprehended in this treaty.

The capitulation of Cochin was soon followed by that of Cannanore—the last Portuguese stronghold on the Malabar Coast. The Cannanore fort seems to have been strong enough to resist the besiegers. But the commandant surrendered before Hustaart on the 13th of February, for which act of cowardice he was executed on his arrival at Goa.

Portugal and Holland had made peace in Europe before the capitulation of Cochin and Cannanore. The treaty had been ratified by the Dutch Government in Holland on the

14th of December 1662 and one of the clauses of the treaty was that all conquered places should be restored to their former masters immediately after the publication of the treaty. Day<sup>1</sup> says that the Dutch General had deliberately withheld the information about the signing of the peace so that it should not prevent his conquest of Cochin. It is said that when the Portuguese accused Van Goens of this charge he coolly replied that he was only playing the same game which the Portuguese themselves had played on the Dutch at the capture of Pernambuco in Brazil not many years ago. Even otherwise, the Dutch had a sound justification in refusing to restore Cochin and Cannanore to the Portuguese. When the Portuguese Viceroy demanded the restoration of these places on the ground that they were captured after the signing of the treaty, the Dutch replied that "it was true the treaty was ratified on the 14th of December 1662, but only came into force so far as the last was concerned after the publication of the said peace which took place three months after the said ratification". Cochin was captured in January and Cannanore in February 1663, but the treaty was published only in March. Therefore the Dutch were not obliged to surrender their conquests<sup>2</sup>.

The capture of Cochin from the Portuguese marks a very important landmark in the history of the Dutch in Malabar. The Portuguese flag ceased to fly over Malabar and the Dutch were left undisputed masters of the country<sup>3</sup>.

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1 Day—"Land of the Perumals" P. 117.

2 Francois Martin who visited Cochin in 1669 observes in this connection: "There have been nevertheless some protests against this capture, the King of Portugal holding that this action was against the terms and subsequent to the treaty of peace concluded between the two nations in Europe. But such protests must needs be upheld more by right of force than by way of proceedings."

The question was finally decided by the treaty of 1669 between Holland and Portugal which stated that Cochin and Cannanore should remain in the hands of the Dutch.

3 Baldaeus says that the Dutch were very liberal in the treatment accorded to the Portuguese "Being thus become entirely masters of Cochin, after it had been 150 years in the possession of the Portuguese, the Dutch General made it his chiefest care to issue his orders not to molest the Portuguese, but to observe punctually the articles of capitulation."



*Dutch Influence in Cochin.* As soon as the Dutch took charge of the government of Cochin, the Muta tavazhi prince was installed on the throne.<sup>1</sup>

A golden crown was made, bearing the insignia of the Dutch East India Company, and Van Goens himself placed it on the prince's head. The very ceremony proclaimed the altered position of the Cochin ruler. The position of the Cochin Raja was that of a mere puppet in the hands of the Dutch Company. He signed a new treaty with the Dutch by which he promised to recognise the authority of the Company in the Cochin fort "so long as the sun and the moon exist". He accepted the Company as his protector in view of the fact that the Company had been responsible for installing him on the throne. The Company was given a monopoly of trade in pepper and cinnamon. The Dutch also got the right to construct three new forts—one at Pallipuram for the protection of Cranganore, another at Cheppuram for the protection of Porakkad and a third at Azhikkal for the protection of Cochin. The Cochin prince was entitled to all the customs and duties traditionally collected by his predecessors. The Christians were placed under the special protection of the Company. Certain arrangements were made concerning the administration of justice in cases of disputes between the Company's dependents and the Raja's subjects. No Portuguese priests were to be allowed to stay within the fortress of Cochin. This treaty<sup>2</sup> not only established the Company's monopoly of trade, but also legalised the sovereign position of the Company in Cochin.

Two days after the signing of the treaty with the Cochin prince, the Dutch concluded an alliance with the Raja of Porakkad

1 Tavernier describes the coronation ceremony as follows:—"The General had a crown made to place on the head of a new king of Cochin, the other having been driven away and on the day which he selected for this grand performance he seated himself on a kind of throne at the foot of which a Malabari called Montani conducted by two or three captains, placed himself on his knees to receive the crown from his hands and to take possession of a kingdom of very limited extent, that is to say, some small territories in the neighbourhood of Cochin".—Vol. I P. 242.

2 Cochy Rajya Charitram, by K. P. P. Menon, Vol. II.

3 The Treaty is dated Meenam 12th, 838 M. E., corresponding to March 20, 1663.



had always been helping the enemies of the Dutch; but there seems to have been no difficulty at all in concluding a friendly alliance. The Raja of Porakkad and the Dutch General met as if they were old friends<sup>2</sup> and a treaty was signed expressing desire to keep their friendship for ever. The Raja of Porakkad promised that he would never be hostile towards the Cochin Raja or the Company. On the other hand he undertook to help them against the Portuguese or any other enemies. Goda Varma, the Vettom prince, was not allowed to enter his territories thereafter. Trade of pepper and cinnamon in his territory was to be conducted with complete agreement with the Cochin Raja and the Dutch. The Company was to construct a new fort at Porakkad. All the Portuguese ships in Porakkad were to be handed over to the Dutch. The Company and the Cochin Raja undertook to protect Porakkad from all its enemies. All the privileges previously enjoyed by the Portuguese in Porakkad were thereafter to be enjoyed by the Dutch.

The treaty with Porakkad strengthened the position of the Company to a considerable extent. It turned a former enemy into a close ally.

Jacob Hutstaart succeeded Van Goens as Governor of Cochin. He signed a fresh treaty with the Cochin prince on Feb. 25, 1664, whereby certain new concessions were gained by the Dutch. The Dutch company was exempted from the payment of tolls to the Cochin prince for carrying goods into the Cochin port. The Company was to enjoy complete liberty for trade with the Cochin merchants and the Raja was not to interfere in their affairs. The Company's monopoly of trade with Cochin was again asserted in the new treaty.

In 1673 Hendrick van Rheede came to Cochin as the commander. The finances of Cochin seem to have been in confusion when he took charge as the Commander. He made certain agreements concerning the administration of Cochin on September 2, 1674. The Raja was to receive 3,000 fanams for his expenses. The allowances for the junior princes were also fixed<sup>1</sup>. Adoptions to the Royal family were to be made only with the consent of the

<sup>2</sup> Patappattu P. 46.

<sup>1</sup> Elaya Raja—1500 Fanams.

Rama Varma— 750 ..

Goda Varma— 450 ..

Company. The Paliam chief was to be in charge of the administration, and the junior princes were not to interfere in the State affairs. The provisions of this agreement were not pleasing to the junior princes. The princes were encouraged by the Nair chieftains who also disliked the interference of the Dutch in internal affairs. The junior princes defied the authority of the Raja and the State was thrown into Civil War. The Raja himself had to leave the capital fearing the troubles of the nobles and the junior princes. He wrote a letter to the Governor General at Batavia in March 1677 informing him of the situation in his State. The Raja received the reply on the 8th of September. The Governor General was of opinion that the Raja himself should settle the affairs of his State. He advised the Raja to return to his capital and protect the "fair name and pride of the Company and the Swaroopam". The Governor General again asserted the mutual confidence between the Company and the Raja, and eagerly desired that it should never be strained.

The Raja tried his best to restore order and peace in his family and State. But the troubles only intensified.

Van Rhee de was succeeded by Jacob Lobo as Commander of Cochin. Lobo signed a new treaty with the Raja on the 21st of May 1678. This agreement stated that the junior princes should not interfere in the State affairs. They were not to go against the orders of the Raja on pain of very severe punishment. They could not enter the Cochin port without the consent of the Raja. The Paliam chief was to manage the administration in consultation with the Raja and the Commander. If the Paliam chief failed to discharge his duties satisfactorily, the Raja could appoint a new chief with the permission of the Commander. Certain arrangements were made for the collection of revenue due to the Raja. The Nairs were told that they would be severely punished if they attempted to create trouble in the State. Some regulations were made concerning the protection of the Christian subjects in Cochin.

The agreement virtually handed the Cochin State over to the Company. It reduced the position of the Raja to that of a mere dependent of the Company. The administration was to be carried on by the Paliam chief who was to be responsible to the Company. The Raja was the nominal head of the State, but he could exercise very little powers. The position of the Raja was



very pitiable. The junior princes were all enraged against him and the Nair nobles were openly supporting the princes. The threat of punishment meted out to the Nair nobles and the junior princes resulted only in aggravating their hostility. They were now planning for deposing the Raja and destroying the Dutch influence in the State. There was no love lost between the local merchants and the Company's merchants; and therefore there was considerable difficulty in the collection of customs and duties. The Dutch Commander at that time—Martin Huysman signed a new agreement with the Raja on the 3rd of May, 1681 at Chennamangalam. This agreement provided another opportunity to the Dutch for tightening their grip over Cochin. The first clause of the agreement declared the Paliam chief as the head of the administration. The allowances for the princes were fixed at the former rates (*i.e.*, 3000 fanams for the Raja, 1500 fanams for the Elaya Raja, 750 fanams for Rama Varma and 450 fanams for Goda Varma.) The paliam chief should see that the allowances were properly given to the princes. The Elaya Raja was not to interfere in State affairs. No adoptions were to be made to the Royal family without the consent of the Company. In short, the affairs of the state were to be conducted by the Paliam chief under instructions from the Commander. He was to be assisted by three others including an officer of the Company.

Captain Hendrick Reins was selected to represent the Company as stipulated in the agreement. Meanwhile, the Paliam chief died leaving as his heir a minor by name Ittikannachen. The Raja appointed Ittikannachen as the prime minister, but as he was a minor, it was necessary to appoint a counsellor. The Raja consulted the Dutch Commander Gulmer Vorsburg as to the appointment of new counsellors, and a fresh agreement was signed between the two on July 25, 1684. Captain Hendrick Reins who was appointed as the Company's representative was to exercise the powers of the prime minister. The minor Paliam chief, Ittiakkannachen, was of course the chief minister in name. He was to be assisted by two counsellors who were also named in the agreement<sup>1</sup>. The treasurer of the State was Perimbala Shenoi—a dependent of the Company. He had not been regular in keeping the accounts and he was never on good terms with the local officers. The Raja had desired the removal of Perimbala

<sup>1</sup> Vadakkenjeril Ramer and Parathurathil Ittinikumaran.



Shenoi and the appointment of a new hand, but the Commander was not prepared to remove him. Thus the Company had the command of both the treasury and the dewanship, and the Raja was reduced to the position of a mere cypher. The Raja was conscious of his growing helplessness. But, he had no other alternative but to depend on the Dutch as he had estranged the junior princes and the nobles. The Paliyam chief was only a minor, and as such he was not powerful. Even otherwise the Raja could not rely on the support of the Paliyam chief as he was more a dependent of the Company than of the Raja. The Dutch were the de-facto rulers of Cochin, and they exercised their authority even in minor matters of the State like the appointment of local officials.

In 1687 Isaak Van Deelan was appointed Commander of Cochin. The highhanded interference by the Company in internal matters drove the Raja to desperation and he himself secretly helped the outbreak of troubles in the state. Some loyal Nair nobles pledged their support for ousting the Dutch from Cochin. The Dutch Governor General at Batavia was constantly informed of the steady deterioration of Dutch influence in Cochin. Events were fast developing in the direction of a rapprochement between the Raja and his nobles against the Dutch. But a dispute of succession arose in Cochin meanwhile, and the Raja was again put to the necessity of depending on Dutch power.

It had been decided at a meeting of the Raja, Elaya Raja, the Dutch Governor and the Paliyam chief at Chennimangalam in May 1681, to adopt some princes and princesses from the Chaliyur family. This decision was given effect to in 1689. But this adoption was not welcome to some nobles especially the Rajas of Parur, Mangat and Manakulam. The Chaliyur princes were dependents of the Dutch, and therefore, their cause was upheld by the Company. The Nair nobles supported the Vettom princes and demanded that adoption should be made from that family. The Vettom princes were popular with the people and the Raja himself was prepared to support them because of his hostility towards the Dutch. But, Paliath Achen stood firmly by the Dutch and the Chaliyur branch. The Dutch had alienated every one at Cochin and their position was very precarious. The Nair nobles invited the Vettom prince to assume leadership. In

1691 he arrived at Mangat accompanied by Ayinikkuttil Nambidi.

The author of 'Keralolpathi' says that the Dutch and the Cochin Raja frightened at this new turn of events, appealed to the Zamorin for help through the Raja of Cranganore. The Zamorin consented to come to their help and signed a truce for 12 years with the Dutch. The Dutch ceded Chettwaye to the Zamorin and agreed to pay the expenses of the war. The Calicut forces commanded by Krishnan, the 'Talachchennore' of Chowghat, crossed into Alangad and Parur. The Dutch forces were commanded by Hendrick Van Rheede. The supporters of the Vettom princes were commanded by Mangat Raja. He was defeated by the Dutch, and Parur and Alangad were plundered by the victors. The Zamorin got Chettwaye as was originally promised.

The war of the Vettom succession secured the premier position of the Dutch once again in Cochin and established it on an unquestionable basis. The Dutch with the help of the Zamorin broke the power of the Nair nobles and local Rajas who had been their bitter enemies. The position of the Dutch as king-makers in Cochin became undisputed. Cochin was reduced to the position of a mere Dutch principality.

The Raja of Cochin died in 1687. The administration of Cochin was in great confusion in the time of his successor. Ittikannachen, the Paliath chief, was never loyal to the new Raja, and he joined sides with his enemies. Collection of customs and revenues fell into arrears. The Company's Indian agent, Bavan Prabhu, was secretly intriguing against the Raja and encouraging these irregularities. Isaac Van Declan, the Dutch Commander, died on the 25th December 1693, and the Raja was in a helpless position. He wrote a letter (on 22nd of Jan. 1694) to the Governor General at Batavia acquainting him of the situation in Cochin. He complained of the hostile attitude of the new Paliath Achen. "Formerly there were loyal and efficient men in the Paliath family", he wrote<sup>1</sup> "but now it is managed by minor urchins.....There are many Swaroopis in my State of which the Paliath is only one. We had done our best to improve the

<sup>1</sup> Translated from the Malayalam document.



position of the Paliyam family. But now all of them have turned against me because of their youthful recklessness.....I have enemies both inside and outside the fort. Therefore, I am put to very hard difficulties. The Menons in my service are not given correct accounts, and customs and duties are not properly remitted to my Government. Bavan is at the root of all these confusions and he is in the pay of my enemy, the Zamorin." The Raja earnestly appealed to the Governor General to do all that was necessary to stop these irregularities. The Raja got the reply that the new Commander, Adrian Van Mattan and the new Commissar General would set matters right and do their best to improve the position of the Company and the Raja. But the irregularities of Bavan Prabhu only became worse. The Commander was also anxious to keep his friendly relation with the Zamorin. The Raja again sent a letter to the Governor General at Batavia (Idavom 871 M. E. 1696 A. D.) complaining of the hostile attitude of the Company's agents. The Commissar of the Company had met the Zamorin at Ponnani and received presents from him. The Raja also drew the attention of the Governor General to the poor state of the finances of the Swaroopam. What enraged the Raja most was the attitude of the Commissar in courting the friendship of the Zamorin. The Raja was seriously afraid that the Dutch may fall under the influence of the Zamorin, which would mean the destruction of his Swaroopam.

In 1697 Hendrick Zwardercroon was appointed Commander of Cochin. The Cochin Raja passed away in 1698 and he was succeeded by Prince Rama Varma. A new agreement was entered into between the Raja and Zwaadercroon. Some arrangements were made regarding the finances of the State. The Company renewed its pledge to protect the State from all its enemies. The Raja in turn promised to send help to the Company if it was attacked by its enemies. This agreement finally set the seal of servitude on the Cochin principality and made it merely an appendage of the Dutch Company.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE ZAMORIN AND THE DUTCH

**W**HEN the Dutch established their power in Cochin, the most resourceful and aggressive of the princes of Malabar



was the Zamorin of Calicut. The Zamorin had been the traditional enemy of the Portuguese, and he extended a willing support to the Dutch to drive out the Portuguese from Cochin. The main ambition of the Zamorin was to gain possession of Cochin through Dutch help. But, the Zamorin was disillusioned at the very beginning when the Dutch signed an agreement with the Cochin Raja undertaking to protect him from all outside attack. The Dutch were careful in seeing that the Zamorin did not become too powerful in Malabar. The Zamorin demanded that at least the island of Vypeen should be ceded to him, but the Dutch were not prepared for that. Thus both the Dutch and the Zamorin knew from the very outset that their relations could not be cordial. There was traditional enmity between the Zamorin and Cochin. Visscher<sup>1</sup> refers to the continual warfare between the two kingdoms and attributes it to the division of the Malayalee community into the two factions—Panniyurkur and Chovarakur. "No firm or lasting peace is ever made" writes Visscher, "but merely so to speak, a cessation of hostilities, invariably followed by a renewal of war". But how far this tradition of the two rival factions was responsible for these constant wars is not certain. More often these wars had originated from their claims on places in each other's territories. The warfare between the rival kings of Cochin and Calicut continued for over 250 years after the arrival of the Portuguese in Malabar, and we have instances of at least nine such conflicts<sup>2</sup>. Both the Portuguese and the Dutch had cleverly availed themselves of all opportunities to better their interests in the Malabar coast. But the commitment of the Dutch to protect Cochin from her enemies had brought considerable loss to the Company. The Dutch Governor General once wrote bitterly to the Cochin Raja. "I do not know how much treasure and how much blood had been spent by the Hon'ble Company to aggrandise your family....."<sup>3</sup> But, it was very late when the Company came to the conclusion<sup>4</sup> "that the Raja of Cochin was no longer to be supported in his interminable fights with the Zamorin.

We have seen before, that the Dutch had ceded Chettwaye to the Zamorin in 1691 in return for the help he had given in the

1 Visscher's Letters. IV.

2 History of Kerala K. P. P. Menon, Vol. I: P. 484.

3 Letter of Jan Van Horn dated 15th November 1705.

4 Resolution of the Supreme Govt. at Batavia.

"war of the Vettom succession." Chettwaye was of great strategic importance for an attack on Cochin. It lay in the territories of Payyencherry Nair, a feudatory of the Zamorin. As soon as the Zamorin gained possession of Chettwaye he took advantage of the position to use it against his hereditary enemy, the Raja of Cochin. He built a line of fortresses on the Cochin frontier and strongly garrisoned them<sup>1</sup>. The Zamorin was fully aware of the fact that his treaty with the Dutch would not be longstanding. Further, the Raja of Cochin was trying his best to bring about a rupture of the peace between the Zamorin and the Dutch. Therefore the Zamorin took all possible steps to enlarge the circle of his friends. The Raja of Kayamkulam was already his ally. Bavan Prabhu was keenly supporting the Zamorin. He was sent to Porakkad, Parur, Tekkumkur and Vadakkumkur to enlist their support for the Zamorin. The Dutch were anxious to avoid war, and they invited the Zamorin and his allies to a conference in January 1701. But the king of Calicut knew that it was only a ruse to gain time and he attacked the Cochin territory. In 1702 the Raja of Porakkad joined sides with the Zamorin and attacked Cochin territory. The Raja of porakkad was an ally of the Company and therefore the Company interfered in the matter and restored peace between the two. Parur also was on hostile terms with Cochin. The Raja of Parur complained to the Dutch that the Cochin Raja was committing outrages in his territories. The Company felt that the grievances of the Raja of Parur were not legitimate and decided to declare war against him. The Zamorin was canvassing the support of Vadakkumkur by proposing an adoption from the Raja's family.

In 1705 the Zamorin died. But his successor continued the war against Cochin. In 1707 he attacked Kodasseri and Muriyanad. Hitherto the Dutch had not actively interfered in the war even though they were frequently reminded by the Cochin Raja of their moral obligation to support him. Now the Dutch Commander decided to take stern steps against the growing aggression of the Zamorin. The Zamorin was told that the Cochin Raja and the other victims of his aggression were in the protection of the Company, and as such,

<sup>1</sup> The important fortresses were Pappanetty, Kattur, Mapranam and Oorakam Trittam.



an attack on them would be tantamount to an attack on the Dutch. The Zamorin expressed his desire to be on friendly terms with Cochin. He also stated that the war against Kodasseri had been provoked by the Kaimal himself and that he had no intention of becoming an enemy of the Company. The Zamorin sent his representatives to Cochin to meet the Commander. A temporary peace was concluded but it was broken in February 1708. The Company was however anxious to avoid war and further negotiations were started with the Zamorin. The Zamorin himself was desirous of peace and on August 30, 1708 he wrote to the Commander to fix a date for an interview with him. The Zamorin was informed that an interview could be held only after deciding the points of dispute. After a series of correspondence between the Zamorin and the Commander, peace was concluded on the 10th of January 1710. According to the terms of the treaty the Zamorin had to hand over Chettwaye to the Dutch. The Payyancherry Nair and Cranganore Raja who were formerly feudatories of the Zamorin came under the protection of the Company. The Raja of Cochin also gained certain territories.

The treaty of 1710 was not approved of by the heir-apparent of Calicut and the Commander-in-chief Dharmot Panikker. The Zamorin was a peace-loving man and he was anxious to stop all war before the Mamankam festival,<sup>1</sup> which was fast approaching. But the loss of Chettwaye was a serious blow to Calicut and the chiefs of the Army and other nobles were very anxious to recover it as early as possible. They knew very well that Chettwaye would be used by the Dutch for operations against them and wanted to prevent it. Visscher speaks of the strategic importance of Chettwaye; "Chettwaye is another fort about twelve leagues from Cochin serving partly to protect commerce and partly as a defence against the Zamorin whose dominions

1 The Mamankam (Mahamakham) was the greatest national festival of Malabar till two centuries ago. The festival was held on the banks of the Periyar river near Tirunavaye once in twelve years. A regular change used to take place in all offices (including even kingship) in all contracts and in all tenures after a period of twelve years (a Vyalavattam). The Mamankam was the great occasion when all the existing relations were re-adjusted by the princes and the people. In the early centuries the kings used to abdicate after a period of twelve years in favour of their successors. But after the power of royalty had become very prominent, this practice was given up. The festival was attended by representatives of all parts of Kerala. Tradition attributes its origin to Parasuram, the legendary hero of Kerala.



lie contiguous. It stands at the mouth of the river and is at present the strongest fortress in Malabar".

As soon as the Dutch gained possession of Chettwaye they resolved to build a new fort there and gave orders to B. Ketel, the Commandant of Malabar to finish it as speedily as possible. There were some lands near Chettwaye which were claimed both by the Cochin Raja and the Zamorin. The Raja of Cochin who was anxious to prevent the aggression of the Zamorin handed over his rights over these territories to the Company.

In 1711 the peace-loving Zamorin of Calicut passed away and his heir-apparent came to the "Stanam." He sent Tamma Panikker (Dharmoth Panikar) who owned some territories in the neighbourhood of Chettwaye to prevent the Dutch from fortifying these places. The Zamorin vigorously protested against the high-handedness of the Dutch, but they proceeded in quick haste with the fortification of the place. The Zamorin turned to the English for help. The English had a few factories on the Malabar coast. They were waiting for an opportunity to destroy Dutch influence in Malabar and step into their shoes. Robert Adam, the chief of the English factory at Tellicherry encouraged the Zamorin to prevent construction of the fortifications at Chettwaye. Visscher gives the following details about the capture of Chettwaye by the Zamorin. "The East India Company having resolved to build a new fort gave orders to B. Ketel, the Commandant of Malabar, to finish it as speedily as possible. This alarmed the Zamorin who knew it was intended to curb his power on this coast. He accordingly left no means untried to impede its progress, and not succeeding by fair methods, he determined to try force. He was encouraged by learning that the garrison consisting of 48 men were lodged outside the half-finished fortress and that none of the requisites had been provided for its defence.....The Zamorin perceived his advantage, crossed the river at night with 600 men who were soon followed by more; and all was effected so quietly that about 4 o'clock in the morning of January 22nd 1715 they surprised the soldiers who were sleeping in their hut, before the fort. They took to flight in great alarm and the Zamorin obtained possession of the place without striking a blow". Captain Alexander Hamilton gives another story about the capture of Chettwaye. "The Dutch were built

ding the fort at Chettwaye and the Zamorin got some of his men under the disguise of labourers to be employed by them and to take an opportunity of surprising the Dutch. The two lieutenants who had the overseeing of the work were one evening diverting themselves with a game at tables in a guard room about half a mile from the fort. They had let some of their soldiers go straggling about and the disguised natives took the opportunity to kill the sentinels, signal to the ambuscade and take the half-built fort..... The Zamorin caused the English flag to be hoisted and the fort was destroyed". How far the account given by Hamilton is correct is open to question. Hamilton was a traveller in the East Indies between the years 1688 and 1723, and he is likely to have first-hand information of these matters. But the story of sending soldiers disguised as labourers is not found in the Letters of Visscher. However, it is clear that the Dutch were taken by surprise at Chettwaye and the Zamorin was able to score a signal success.

The fort fell into the hands of the Zamorin who made a surprise attack. The loss of Chettwaye was a serious blow to the Dutch prestige in Cochin. "When the tidings of this disaster reached Cochin", says Visscher, "it caused a universal panic among the Dutch and gave rise to a spirit of indolence among the natives". Ketel, the Dutch Commandant, marched against Chettwaye with three battalions. He was opposed by Mangatt Achen, the Zamorin's General. But the Dutch were able to disperse the army. "Many were cut down, others drowned in the river and others took refuge in the fort at Chettwaye where their defeat caused a great panic"<sup>2</sup>. If the Commandant had followed up his victory by attacking the fort, the Zamorin would have abandoned it in alarm. But, instead of doing this Ketel marched with his troops into a neighbouring village and thus gave time to the enemy to prepare for the defence. The Zamorin's forces got fresh supplies from the English and erected barricades at the entrances to the fort. Ketel decided to attack the fort on the 1st of February and scale the walls, but when the troops reached the walls they found that they had forgotten to bring their scaling ladders and were forced to retire foiled with the loss of eightymen. The Zamorin took advantage of this

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



opportunity to build a fort at Pappanetty between Chettwaye and Cranganore. It was fortified with three trenches and manned with a strong troop of soldiers among whom were some Portuguese and English officers.

Towards the end of 1715, three Captains arrived from Batavia with reinforcements. They attacked the fort early in 1716, but, "owing partly to some misunderstanding among the officers and partly to the faint-heartedness of Captain Pluis, the second in command, who trembled at the sound of a cannon", the attempt failed. When the defenders saw the advance of the Dutch, they rushed out of the fort on the opposite side. The Dutch troops who were stationed there thought that it was a sudden assault on them and fled in disorder. Immediately the Zamorin's forces returned to the forsaken fortress. The failure of the expedition created universal consternation. To add to that there was a rumour afloat that the allied princes were going to desert the Dutch. The Raja of Parur proceeded against Cranganore. Hearing about this Ketel advanced with his men to the assistance of the garrison at Cranganore.

When the news of the repeated failures of the Dutch reached Batavia, they decided to send a large force to make a successful attack against Chettwaye. They attributed the success of the Zamorin to the treachery of their Indian allies. Therefore they declined the offer of help made by Ali Raja and Kolattiri. In 1716 William Bakker Jacobsz was despatched from Batavia as Admiral and Commander-in-chief. Johannes Hertenberg was sent to supersede Ketel as Commander. They brought with them a huge army of about 30,000 soldiers, consisting of Europeans and Javanese and joined with the forces of the Raja of Cochin. Bakker Jacobsz arrived in Cochin on the 23rd of November 1716. One of his first steps was to inform the different princes and chieftains of Malabar of his intention to punish the Zamorin. Letters were sent to as many as 42 chieftains in Malabar<sup>1</sup>. The

<sup>1</sup> Galletti's Introduction, to "Dutch in Malabar" P. 20.

To the Raja of	Porca
"	Repolim
"	Calicoilan
"	De-Maria
"	Signatty
"	Trevancore
"	Teckenkore
"	Berkenkore
"	Paritaly



Dutch attacked Pappanetty (on the 16th January 1717), where the Zamorin was entrenched with his forces. The Dutch resolved to attack Pappanetty on three points simultaneously. The attack started early morning and it was carried out with such great force that the Zamorin was compelled to raise a flag of truce. But the Dutch paying no heed to this, carried on their attack. The Dutch capturing two trenches advanced to the third to which the Zamorin's forces had retreated. The Zamorin's forces under Dharmoth Panikker defended with great courage and inflicted heavy losses on the Dutch. But they could withstand no longer and again hoisted a flag of truce. They promised to leave the fort; but meanwhile the European officers within the fort had set fire to the powder magazine so that it might not fall into the hands of the enemy. That created a big confusion and the infuriated Dutch slaughtered as many as three thousand of the Zamorin's troops. They destroyed the fort rasing it to the ground. The Dutch sent some ships to attack Chettwaye. But meanwhile the

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To the Ameen of	Attinga
"	Cochin
To the Raja of	Cartadavil
"	Aijrore
"	Palcatchery
"	Valavanatty
"	Colastry
"	Cranganore
To the second	
prince of	Mangatty
"	Bardella
To the Pula of	Carriatta
" Gurip of	Trevancore
" 7,000 of	Caraporam
" 30,000 of	Cururnadda
To the Palyat	
" 3,000 of	Batjpin
"	Codachery Caymal
"	Corretty Caymal
"	Changara Codda Caymal
"	Mannacotta Atsja
"	Tottacherry Talehenore
"	Murianatty Nambiar
"	Aynicity Nanbeddy
"	Raja of Paru
"	Balnore of Bargara
"	Adergia of Cannanore
"	Caymal of Cunattunaddu
"	Tevengul Nairo
"	Para Elladam
"	Palurgatty Caymal
"	Tachetta Munancur
"	Caymal of Angercaymal
"	Payenchery Nairo

Chettwaye fort had been abandoned by the defenders and that too easily fell into the hands of the Dutch. The Dutch advanced into the interior and occupied Maprana, Towlainpuri, Avatorti and Urakam. Desultory fighting was still continuing and the Dutch too were anxious for peace. If the General had chosen to advance his victorious banners he could no doubt have made himself master of the Zamorin's court at Ponnani and of Calicut itself. But Bakker Jacobsz did not have a very large force under his command and further the expected re-inforcements from Ceylon did not arrive. Also it was not the policy of the Dutch Company at that time to assume the sovereignty over extensive territories. They were mainly interested in trade, and all that they desired was to get the products of Malabar at a lower price. The Dutch made peace with the Zamorin on December 17, 1717. Both parties agreed to be in perpetual alliance and friendship. The Zamorin proposed to pay a war indemnity of 85,000 fanams. The Dutch General was conscious of the fact that 85,000 fanams was too poor a sum to be received as a war indemnity. But he was prepared to accept this nominal amount in view of the financial difficulties of the Zamorin. The Zamorin, had to cede Chettwaye and Pappinivattam to the Dutch. Dharmot Panikker "the chief firebrand of the treason of Chettwaye"<sup>1</sup> was held responsible for all these calamities, and in order to avert such calamities in future, he was to be dismissed from the Zamorin's services. All the lands and properties belonging to Panikker were forfeited to the Company. The Company undertook to help the Zamorin against foreign invaders. In turn, the Zamorin promised to help the Company in case of an attack from outsiders. The Zamorin also promised to be friendly with Cochin. The Dutch were given certain commercial privileges in Calicut. They were allowed to erect factories at Ponnani, Calicut and several other places. The Dutch promised to cede Punnattur Swaropam to the Zamorin and abandon their territorial claims there. The Zamorin was not to receive any fugitives from the Dutch side. The French were to be given no commercial privileges in the Zamorin's territories. Similarly, the Zamorin was to refuse permission to the Portuguese and the English for trade in his country. The Zamorin gave up all his claims over the territories of

1. Moens' Memoirs.



"Payyencherry Nair". They were placed under the special protection of the Company. The Zamorin was not to receive any fugitives from the Cochin court.

The treaty was not acceptable to the authorities at Batavia. They were dissatisfied with the Dutch General for being satisfied with a small indemnity and for handing over to the king of Cochin some of the territories ceded by the Zamorin.

Though the Zamorin was defeated by the Dutch forces, it was not a final defeat. The gains on the side of the Dutch were not sufficient to justify the enormous expenditure they had to incur in the war. However, the campaign of 1717 restored the Company's prestige in Malabar at least for some time.

## CHAPTER IV

### TRAVANCORE AND THE DUTCH

THE Dutch had very little to do with the State of Travancore in the first phase of their history in Malabar. They were concentrating their attention on Cochin as they believed the mastery over Cochin would secure for them the trade monopoly of Malabar. Their success in driving out the Portuguese from Cochin had resulted in the total subordination of that state. It left them in an obligation to protect an important state of Malabar from all its enemies, and thus we find the Dutch involved in the complicated politics of Malabar. No doubt, the Dutch made use of their sovereign position in Cochin to augment their trade; but the security of their trade depended upon their success in adjusting the political balance between Cochin and Calicut. Travancore rose into prominence in Malabar only in 1729 with the accession of Prince Marthanda Varma.

When the Dutch first came to Malabar, Travancore was a very small principality. Van Goens wrote in 1675 "Travancore begins with the West Cape of Comorin and ends on the coast about two hours walk or less north of Tengapatnam." Besides Travancore, there were many important principalities in the south, namely, Attingal, Quilon, Kayamkulam, Elayadathu Swaroopam, etc.

We have already seen that the Portuguese possessions at Quilon had been attacked by the Dutch in 1661. The Dutch at that time were not anxious to establish their supremacy in



Quilon, but they were only interested in destroying the influence of the Portuguese. The attack on Quilon was carried out by Admiral Van Goens who managed to defeat the Nair troops there and destroy the Portuguese fortifications. After pillaging and plundering the town, the Dutch left for Cranganore.

In 1662 the Dutch signed a treaty with the Raja of Travancore at Kallada. Its main object was to gain the supremacy for trade in pepper.

In 1663 and 1664 the Dutch deputed Captain Nieuhoff who was a factor at Quilon to negotiate with the chief princes of Travancore. The first kingdom which he visited was Kayamkulam, which was at that time ranked as the second principality of Travancore.

Nieuhoff says, "We arrived at Kalkolāng on the 22nd January 1664. I gave notice of my arrival by our interpreter to the king who soon after returned in company of a Residoor from the king to fetch me to court.....After the first ceremonies and compliments such as are usual in this place were passed, I surrendered my credentials to the king who received them with a great deal of respect and seeming satisfaction." After signing an agreement with the Raja of Kayamkulam, Nieuhoff went to Porakkad. On arrival at Porakkad the Captain was informed that the Raja had left for Kodamalur some ten days before. He met the Raja at Kodamalur. Nieuhoff gives the following account about his visit. "After the usual respect paid, I delivered to him my credentials which he, having received, ordered all his attendants and an interpreter among the rest to withdraw, because he had a mind to discourse with me alone in Portuguese, which he understood very well. I told him that I was sent on purpose by my masters to His Majesty to assure him of their friendship and to pay the money stipulated by the last treaty.....The king gave for answer that it never had been a custom to weigh the pepper at Cochīn, and that therefore he hoped the Company would not introduce any novelties in his territories.....I agreed that the pepper should be received and weighed at Porka.....The king appeared to be highly satisfied thereat, desiring that a factor might be sent thither forthwith, to buy and receive the pepper." The Raja of Porakkad was a clever diplomat and he told Nieuhoff that "he had caused the flags of the English and some other nations to be

taken down and the Dutch flag to be set up" in his territories. He wanted to impress upon the Captain the troubles he had undertaken to secure the interests of the Dutch.

Nieuhoff next visited Madathumkur—the territory that lies between Kayamkulam and Quilon. The demands that the Dutch made upon the king were "to forbid the importation of opium, the peeling of the wild cinnamon and the exportation of pepper." The Mohomedan merchants who had the trade monopoly there opposed the proposals of the Dutch. After some persuasions the Dutch "overcame all difficulties, the king having granted them all that they demanded except the peeling of wild cinnamon."

Though Madathumkur was a small principality, it was an important centre of pepper trade, and the Captain was anxious to come to an agreement with the king.

After signing the agreement Nieuhoff went to Quilon to interview the Raja of Travancore. After some negotiations a treaty was signed between the Dutch and the chief princes of Travancore. The articles of agreement were (1) "Nobody shall import, sell or exchange opium into these countries" (Karunagapalli, Travancore, Quilon and Kottarakara) except the Dutch East India Company.

(2) "Nobody without any exception shall be permitted to export any pepper or cinnamon out of this country or sell them to anybody except to the said Company."

(3) "A certain price was settled betwixt both parties and what share each should have in the customs, whereby all former pretensions and exceptions should be annulled."

Nieuhoff had some difficulty in negotiating this treaty. When he first visited the Raja of Travancore, the Raja expressed his dissatisfaction at the conduct of the Dutch in Quilon. He insisted on paying reparations to the Queen of Quilon. The Queen of Quilon had also complained about the delay the Dutch were making in paying the customs due to her. Finally, all points of dispute were settled in an interview and a friendly alliance was signed between the Dutch and the Queen. Nieuhoff gives the following description about the interview. "After I had paid the

1 Quoted from Travancore State Manual by Nagam Ayya, Vol. I. Ch. : VI. P. 307.



usual compliments I showed her the proposition I was to make to her in writing, which she ordered to be read twice, the better to understand the meaning of it, which being done she asked me whether this treaty comprehended all the rest and whether they were annulled by it, unto which I having given her a sufficient answer, she agreed to all our propositions, which were accordingly signed immediately."

After signing these agreements and contracts with the princes of Travancore, the Dutch began to devote their attention mainly to trade. The Dutch had a small settlement at Quilon under Nieuhoff, but they did not attempt to assert any political rights in Travancore. Further they were so much involved in the politics of Cochin and Calicut that they had no time to pursue any such schemes in Travancore. Trade was their only interest as far as Travancore was concerned.

**Rise of Marthanda Varma.** The accession of the great Marthanda Varma in 1729 was a significant event in the history of Malabar. By his vigorous activities extending over a period of over 29 years, Marthanda Varma brought about the political unification of Travancore. Thereafter Travancore was destined to play a decisive role in the politics of Malabar.

Marthanda Varma ascended the throne under extremely adverse circumstances. There were no organised departments for the transaction of state business. The finances of the state were in great confusion. His predecessor, Rama Varma Raja, had entered into an agreement with the Pandyan (Government of the Madura Nayaks) Government by which he had promised to pay an annual tribute of about 3,000 Rupees in return for military help from a Pandyan army consisting of 1,000 cavalry and 2,000 infantry soldiers. The pay of this contingent and the annual tribute were in arrears for a long time. Complete anarchy prevailed in the kingdom, and there was no respect for royalty. "The country was honeycombed with petty chieftains who collecting around themselves bands of brigades subsisted on pillage and plunder and harassed the Raja and his people by turns frustrating all attempts to establish order or any settled form of Government."<sup>1</sup> The Raja's following was very small and his authority was only in name. The Ettuveetil Pillamars and

<sup>1</sup> *Travancore State Manual*. Nagam Iyya. Vol. I. chap. VI. P. 333



their Madampis were practically independent of the king. The power of this Nair oligarchy had long been established in Travancore and the predecessors of Marthanda Varma had failed to suppress it. The pillamars were originally tenants of the Potti Jennies. In the time of Umayamma Ranee (1678—1683) these Pillamars had usurped the properties of their landlords and established themselves as lords of their own localities independent of the Queen. The Pillamars belonged to the eight Nair houses of Marthandaom, Ramanamatam, Kulathoor, Kazhakuttam, Venganoor, Chempazhanathi, Kodamun, and Pallichal. The ambition of the Pillamars was to extirpate the royal family and to establish a republic of their own.

The task of the Maharaja was an extremely difficult one. Even as the Elaya Raja he had insisted on destroying the power of the turbulent Nair nobles and thereby made himself extremely unpopular with them. As soon as he ascended the throne, he started with his daring schemes of re-organisation. Finding that the maintenance of the Pandyan forces was an unnecessary drain on his treasury, he dispensed with their services and sent them back. But withdrawal of the Pandyan troops encouraged the feudatory chiefs and nobles to organise a large scale rebellion.

The late Maharaja had left two sons known as the "Kunju Thampis". The Pillamars persuaded the Thampis to claim their father's throne, even though the right of succession in Travancore is definitely for the nephew of the deceased king and not his sons. The Thampis sought the help of the Pandyan Governor who readily granted their request. The Governor sent one of his officers, Alagappa Mudaliar with a small force to enquire into the claims of the rival parties and to install the Thampis on the throne. But, the Maharaja convinced Mudaliar of his legitimate rights to the throne, whereupon he returned to Trichinopoly. Marthanda Varma organised several new regiments of Maravas and constructed strong forts in important strategic points. He also requested Mudaliar to leave half of the Pandyan contingent in his charge in order to put down the rebellion of the feudal chiefs.

Assisted by the Maravars and the Pandyan army, Marthanda Varma set out on his bold scheme of the suppression of the Pillamars and their allies. His idea was to round up the whole band of the Pillamars without letting any one know of his schemes. Secret orders were issued to the soldiers to arrest all

rebel chieftains simultaneously at a given signal. He posted horsemen between Nagercoil and Trivandrum for carrying out this order. When these preparations were going on, the elder of the Thampis came to the palace one morning to pay his respects to the Maharaja. But the guards on duty (acting under the instructions of the Raja) prevented him from entering the palace. The Thampi lost his life in his encounter with the guards. The younger Thampi who attempted to avenge the death of his brother was killed by the Raja. Orders were immediately issued to arrest all the rebels and in a few hours, the Pillamars were seized. Forty two of the nobles were sentenced to death. The brahmins who had taken part in the rebellion were banished from the State. The properties of all the rebels were confiscated to the State. "This was the first and most important blow struck against the Malabar Political system", says Pannikker. "With it went the feudal conception of Malabar Polity".

After the suppression of his enemies, Marthanda Varma turned his attention to the extension of his dominions. Quilon was the first prey to the aggression of Marthanda Varma. The royal family of Quilon was a branch of the Travancore House. In 1731 the Quilon Raja formed an alliance with the Raja of Kayamkulam by adopting some members from the family of the latter. Marthanda Varma was not consulted on this step. He considered it as a hostile combination of Quilon and Kayamkulam against his power and on this pretence led a powerful army against Quilon. Marthanda Varma destroyed the forts of Quilon and other defensive works. The Raja of Quilon sued for peace; he promised to break off his alliance with Kayamkulam and agreed to the annexation of his territory by Travancore after his death. The Quilon Raja was brought to Trivandrum where he was placed in one of the state palaces as a prisoner. A small garrison of soldiers was stationed at Quilon for the maintenance of peace there.

Meanwhile, Attingal had been amalgamated with Travancore. Attingal was the maternal house of the Travancore princes. Marthanda Varma persuaded the Queen of Attingal to resign her sovereign authorities to Travancore.

The acquisition of Attingal and Quilon alarmed the other Rajas. The Raja of Kayamkulam began to concert means to



prevent the further aggressions of Marthanda Varma. In October 1773 Ichara Patare, a Ragaidoor of the Raja of Kayamkulam, accompanied by two of the Cochin Raja's friends, called upon the Dutch Governor, Adrian Matten. He stated that the Raja of Travancore was making great preparations to attack Kayamkulam on the 16th of that month. The Raja of Kayamkulam being an ally of the Dutch, earnestly sought their assistance against Marthanda Varma. Ichara Patare also stated that Marthanda Varma was trying to persuade Tekkenkore and Porakad to join the war. But the Commander was in no mood to promise help to Kayamkulam. By a resolution of the Batavia Government in 1721, the Company was not allowed to interfere in the wars of local princes, and therefore Adrian Matten gave a convenient excuse. He told Ichara Patare "that the cause of these troubles was owing to the Raja of Culli-Quilon, having without any provocation, invaded the Marta territories. He continued that he could give no assistance, "but as the chief of Perittally had refused leave to the Travancoreans to pass through his country to attack Culli-Quilon, they had better join their forces to those of the Perittally chief." But advice was not what kayamkulam sought from the Dutch. The Raja stood in immediate need of military help. So he hurried towards the chieftains of the Northern States. The kings of the northern principalities assembled under the persidentship of the Cochin Raja and resolved to assist the Raja of Quilon in regaining his lost kingdom. They sent secret emissaries to Trivandrum to inform the captive prince about their plans. The Raja of Quilon managed to escape from Trivandrum. He joined sides with the Raja of Kayamkulam and attacked the territories of Travancore at Kallada and Mavelikara. The Travancore forces under the Dalawa resisted, but they were obliged to retreat.

The Maharaja made vast preparations for a simultaneous attack on Cochin and Kayamkulam. The Travancore army was strengthened with additions of cavalry and infantry. New fire arms were obtained from English merchants trading at Anjengo and Edava. In 1734 Quilon and Kayamkulam were attacked by the Maharaja's forces under the command of Thanu Pillai and Sthanapathy Kumaraswami Pillai and Rama Iyen. Several battles were fought against the Kayamkulam troops which were

under the command of the Raja himself. In the course of these battles the Kayamkulam Raja was killed, but his soldiers continued to fight. He was succeeded by his younger brother who carried out the operations with greater vigour. Marthanda Varma strengthened his army by a new body of recruits. Rama Iyen went over to Tinnevely from where he brought a regiment of Maravars. Rama Iyen himself took command of the army and marched to Kayamkulam. The Kayamkulam Raja appealed to Cochin and the Dutch for help, but finding that no help was forthcoming sued for peace. Consequently, hostilities were suspended and the war came to a close.

In the same year Marthanda Varma annexed Elayadath Swaroopam. The Raja of Elayadath Swaroopam died leaving as his successor a princess. The real administration was in the hands of a Sarvadhikariakar. Marthanda Varma seized the principality and banished the Sarvadhikariakar. The princess was allowed to stay either at Trivandrum or at Kottarakara, but of course after relinquishing all her claims to her kingdom.

Meanwhile the Raja of Quilon had died and his country was taken over by the Kayamkulam Raja basing his claim on the adoption. Marthanda Varma repudiated the claims of the Kayamkulam Raja over Quilon on the ground that the former adoptions had been cancelled by the deceased Quilon Raja. Further he claimed that Quilon should be amalgamated with Travancore as its royal family was related to the Travancore royal family.

The Dutch were alarmed at the astonishing successes of Marthanda Varma. It was highly necessary to their interests to prevent any one prince growing too powerful in Malabar. The Dutch had hitherto endeavoured to secure their position as arbitrators in Malabar, but the activities of Marthanda Varma convinced them that they could not continue this position any further. They were particularly interested in the fate of Quilon and Kayamkulam as they had their own factories there. Still they had refused to interfere in the first stages of the war as they legitimately feared that it would endanger their interests. But now it became no longer possible for them to remain passive spectators. The Dutch Governor at Cochin, Adrian Matten, sent a messenger to the Maharaja asking him to stop further



aggressions on Kayamkulam and Quilon. Marthanda Varma received the messenger with great courtesy, but sent a reply to the Governor that His Excellency need not trouble himself about affairs which did not concern him. He added that he would take special interest in promoting the commercial prosperity of the Company, but he regretted to find the Governor attempting to interfere with the internal affairs of Travancore.

In 1739 Van Imhoff, "the bitter enemy of his opponents, and a most intolerant Governor came from Ceylon to examine into and report upon the Cochin accounts"<sup>1</sup>. In his report to the Supreme Government at Batavia dated 6th July 1739, he wrote "The king of Travancore having been successful in the wars which he had undertaken, had rendered himself so much respected among the chief kings of the Malabar coast, that he was looked upon by every one with eyes of jealousy and apprehension". He was of opinion "that if that were requisite for the Company to maintain a balance of power amongst the chiefs of the Malabar coast, it could never be made to preponderate more to the prejudice or danger of the Company than in favour of that prince who was almost wholly attached to their competitors, and whose increase of power could not but be pregnant with the most alarming consequences to their interests"<sup>2</sup>.

So, Van Imhoff decided to curtail the rising power of Travancore and took up the cause of the exiled princess of Elayadathu Swaroopam. Day says that it would have been more judicious if the Cochin council had waited for reinforcements from Batavia. The troops in Cochin consisted of only 462 infantry and 23 artillery. But matters were regarded as too serious to admit of delay. Further it was believed that the neighbouring petty chieftains would join sides with the Dutch as soon as they started the war. In 1740 he sent a protest to the King of Travancore espousing the cause of the exiled princess. Imhoff himself carried the message and it is said that he threatened an invasion of the Travancore territory finding that the Raja would not yield to his persuasions. The Raja replied that "doubtless he might do so, but there were forests into which he could retire in safety". Imhoff retorted that "where Travancoreans could go, the Dutch

<sup>1</sup> Day. *Land of the Perumals*.

<sup>2</sup> Stavorinus' *Voyages to the East Indies*. Vol. III. P. 240.

could follow"<sup>1</sup>. The interview is said to have abruptly closed with a scornful remark from the Raja that he had himself been thinking of some day invading Europe with his Munchies (canoes) and fishermen.

Finding that there were no prospects of an amicable settlement, Van Imhoff decided to proceed against Travancore. He wrote to Ceylon for a detachment of infantry and artillery and strengthened the Dutch army at Quilon.

In 1741 Imhoff installed the exiled princess of Elayadathu Swaroopam on her throne. In return the Dutch gained "a large farm at Airoor about three Dutch miles from Quilon and also Bichoor in the Berkencoor country"<sup>2</sup>. When Marthanda Varma heard about the activities of the Dutch, he gathered his soldiers and straightway attacked the Dutch and the Elayadathu Swaroopam princess. The Dutch were utterly defeated and Elayadathu Swaroopam was formally annexed to Travancore. The Rani fled to Cochin and placed herself under the protection of Van Imhoff<sup>3</sup>. The Raja captured all the Dutch possessions in Travancore and seized all the goods they had stored in their factories. The Dutch returned to Cochin in the face of these serious reverses.

After annexing Elayadathu Swaroopam, Marthanda Varma turned against Kayamkulam. Meanwhile the Dutch received reinforcements from Ceylon and they invaded the Travancore territory. Galletti quoting from the Dutch Letters to Batavia gives the following information about the plans of the Dutch. "In January 1741 Colachel in Travancore was occupied with the view of attacking Travancore in his own country. The idea was to seize the whole country from Colachel to Cape Comorin and make a Dutch province of it as it is the most beautiful district in Malabar and all the cloth places are there. It was then still hoped that in spite of the war in Java the Company might be able to send troops from Batavia for the reduction of Travancore. Anji Caimal and Marta were also to be annexed and Bercuncur whose king had been declared a rebel by the Dutch was to be retained." The Dutch landed at Tengapattanam, Kadiapattanam and other places in South Travancore. The Travancore army at

1 Land of the Perumals. Day.

2 Land of the Perumals. Day.

3 It is said that the Dutch gave the princess a daily allowance of Rs. 2 As. 5.



this time was in the north, engaged in operations against Kayamkulam. Therefore the Dutch could easily subjugate almost all the villages in South Travancore between Colachel and Kottar. They were even contemplating an attack on the Raja's palace at Padmanabhapuram. When the Maharaja heard about the advance of the Dutch, he hastened to the South with all the forces at his command. Rama Iyen who was engaged in war with Kayamkulam in the North was ordered to join him at Padmanabhapuram. The Maharaja displayed his conspicuous abilities in tackling a dangerous crisis. He raised a Nair force and strengthened the infantry stationed in South Travancore. Rama Iyen arrived from the North with the whole army. It is said that the Maharaja strongly remonstrated with the Governor of Cochin and even wrote to the Supreme Government at Batavia about the unprovoked invasions of his territories by the Dutch forces. The Maharaja took another precaution to strengthen his position. He sent an embassy to the French Governor at Pondicherry to negotiate a treaty with the French. The Maharaja promised to give them certain commercial privileges in Travancore and also to cede certain lands in Colachel and other places for erecting factories. The French in turn promised to assist the Raja against all his enemies.

The battle of Colachel<sup>1</sup> commenced on the 10th of August 1741. The Maharaja took personal command of the operations. Rama Iyen's troops broke through the Dutch line and threw the

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<sup>1</sup> Galletti gives the following account about the battle, basing his accounts on the material furnished by Letters to Batavia.

"In August 1741 the Dutch garrison at Colachel was attacked by Travancore and surrendered. On the 7th a red hot ball having fired a barrel of gun powder and caused a conflagration in the stockade in which the whole of the rice supply was consumed.

... In October 1741, I find the Malabar administration reporting that the news of the Company's troubles in Java had been industriously spread throughout Malabar by the Company's European rivals and by the king of Travancore and that the native chiefs thought the time had come to shake off the Company's heavy yoke and drive it from the coast. The Cochin administration had not been able to get reinforcements even from Ceylon to whom they had applied for 200 Europeans and 200 Malays, the Governor in Council of Ceylon not being able to spare any troops, and "what makes the danger even greater is that Travancore has appointed deserter Sergeant Duyenschoot to be General over his troops."

Dutch army into great confusion. The Dutch were compelled to retreat to their fort. About twenty-four of them were taken prisoners and sent to Udayagiri. Immediately the Travancore troops besieged the Dutch fortress. In the course of a few hours the Dutch fort was taken and the Dutch hurriedly sailed to Cochin.

The defeat of the Dutch at Colachel was no doubt due to the superiority of their enemy in strength. The Travancore forces outnumbered the Dutch. The Dutch had another disadvantage. They had no cavalry force to combat the enemy. The Dutch who were taken prisoners enjoyed kind treatment from the Raja. All of them were enlisted as officers in the Travancore army. Among the Dutch captives were two important officers—Eustachius De Lannoy and Donadin. De Lannoy, who later came to be known as Valia Kappithan (Great Captain) was selected for the organisation of a special regiment of sepoys. These two played a very important part in the development of the Travancore army. Their services were extremely valuable to the Maharaja in his subsequent conquests. The strong fort round Udayagiri<sup>1</sup> now stands as the monument of the Dutch Captain's engineering skill. "De Lannoy, commonly known in Travancore as the Valia Kappithan (Great Captain) was in the manner of an experiment entrusted with the organisation and drilling of a special regiment of sepoys; this he did very successfully and to the satisfaction of the Maharaja. Several heroic stories are extant of the achievements of this particular regiment. De Lannoy was next made a captain and entrusted with the construction of forts and the organisation of magazines and arsenals. He reorganised the whole army and disciplined it on European models, gave it a smart appearance and raised its efficiency to a very high order"<sup>2</sup>.

The battle of Colachel is of great political significance both for the Dutch and Travancore. It was the first serious blow sustained by the Dutch in Malabar, and it marked the beginning of their decline. The Dutch had hitherto maintained their predominant position in Malabar unchallenged by any native or foreign power. But for the first time they had to face a powerful prince

1 This fort is famous in Travancore as "De Lannoy Kotta"

2 *Travancore State Manual* Vol. I Nagam Iyya. Ch. VI. P. 343.



in Malabar before whom they had to admit defeat. If the Dutch had been successful at Colachel, Travancore also would have become a Dutch appendage like Cochin. That would have seriously altered the history of Travancore. The victory over the Dutch proclaimed the superiority of Marthanda Varma who proceeded with his scheme of expansion with redoubled vigour.

After the expulsion of the Dutch from Colachel the Maharaja resumed his war with Quilon and Kayamkulam. Rama Iyen was sent to the North to renew the war he was already waging at the time of the Dutch invasion of Colachel. He was assisted by De Lannoy who had been appointed as Captain in the Travancore army.<sup>1</sup> The Dutch were secretly assisting the Raja of Kayamkulam and the war dragged on without either side scoring any decisive success. In 1742, the Travancore army was repelled by Atchyutha Warriar, a veteran Kariakar of the Kayamkulam Raja, in its attempt to seize the Dutch fort at Quilon. Fresh supplies of arms and ammunition came for the Travancore troops from Trivandrum. In 1743 the Kayamkulam troops took the offensive and attacked Kilimanoor, about twenty miles south of Quilon, a territory of the Travancore Raja. Marthanda Varma hastened to Kilimanoor with an army of 5,000 Nairs and a corps of sappers and miners. He had received arms and ammunition from the English at Anjengo and the French at Mahe. The Kayamkulam troops were besieged at Kilimanoor where they held out for 68 days. Finally they surrendered and the fort was recaptured. The Maharaja continued his victories, advancing towards Kayamkulam. The Kayamkulam Raja had lost the major part of his army at Kilimanoor and he found himself in a helpless position. He sued for peace and a treaty was signed at Mannar in September 1742. The Kayamkulam Raja promised to be a vassal of Travancore paying an annual tribute of 1000 rupees and one elephant. He ceded a large portion of his territory to Travancore and also promised to treat all enemies of Travancore as his own enemies.

<sup>1</sup> Many European adventurers had taken service in the armies of Indian princes. e.g., Peixoto in the service of Hyder Ali. Sumroo alias Walter Heinhardt in the service of Mir Kassim of Bengal; Alexander Gardener and Avitabile Coote in the service of Ranjit Singh.

Ref.—*Hindustan under Freelances*. H. G. Keene. *European Military Adventurers in Hindustan*. Compton.

The Travancore forces now marched against Quilon. The Raja resisted for some time. Finally Quilon was annexed to Travancore.

The Maharaja understood that the Rajas of Kottayam and Vadakkumkur had rendered assistance to the Kayamkulam Raja in his war with Travancore. On this pretence he sent an army under the heir-apparent to invade these countries. The prince captured the Kottayam fort and took the Raja prisoner. The Raja of Vadakkumkur, when he heard about the fall of Kottayam, fled to Calicut. Kottayam and Vadakkumkur were annexed to Travancore.

The treaty of Mannar and the rapid expansion of Travancore convinced the Dutch that it was dangerous to continue their hostilities with Marthanda Varma and now they were inclined to make peace. Rama Iyen informed the Dutch through the Kayamkulam Raja that Travancore was fully prepared to march against the Dutch, but the Maharaja had no objection to sign a peace with them provided the terms were reasonable. It was both a threat and a taunt. The Maharaja knew that the Dutch were anxious to come to terms with him, finding that they had no other alternative. The Dutch Governor received this offer with great pleasure and directed the Rajas of Cochin and Thekkumkur to come to a settlement with Travancore. But the conclusion of peace with Travancore and the Dutch was certainly not conducive to the interests of these princes and therefore they delayed these proceedings. The Dutch Governor then directly proposed a friendly settlement with the Maharaja. The Maharaja deputed Rama Iyen and Thalavady Kunju Muthathu Kariakar to negotiate peace on his behalf. The Dutch were represented by Ezekel Rabbi and Silvester Mendes. The conference was held at Mavelikara and after prolonged discussion, a treaty was drafted in 1743. The terms of the treaty were extremely favourable to Travancore, but when they were submitted to Marthanda Varma, he proposed some stringent clauses, restricting the freedom of the Dutch to interfere in the affairs of any of the native princes. The original draft of the treaty was acceptable to the Dutch, but when the proposals of the Maharaja were placed before them, they hesitated to ratify them. Further, Rabbi and Mendes, the Dutch representatives in the peace conference, informed the Cochin Council of their personal impression that Travancore was



not likely to come to any terms. The negotiations were postponed without any definite settlement.

Some time later, the negotiations were renewed when both parties assembled at Parur, a place near Quilon. Two conferences were held at Parur, but as Rama Iyen stuck firmly to the original conditions, they failed.

Meanwhile, the Kayamkulam Raja was intriguing to regain his lost position. The tributes he had promised to pay to Travancore had been in arrears. Marthanda Varma directed Rama Iyen to proceed to Kayamkulam to enforce the conditions of the treaty of Mannar. The Kayamkulam Raja was obstinate in his refusal to pay the tribute as he considered it '*infra dig*' and chose to abandon his country. Kayamkulam was therefore annexed to Travancore.

With the annexation of Kayamkulam the Dutch lost all hopes of gaining any further concessions from Travancore. Pepper was their main concern in Travancore, but they saw to their great dismay that the English had acquired the monopoly for that article. The Dutch were now prepared to accept all the terms of Travancore and come to a final settlement. They "learnt the lesson from the ruinous war with Travancore that it was not expedient to entangle the Company in another war, the expenses of which were always certain but the issue uncertain<sup>1</sup>". The Dutch always viewed these things from the financial point of view. They were successful to some extent in the beginning stages of the war, but later it proved to be very disastrous. "The Company squandered uselessly an immense sum of money", Moens regrets "and the Signatty<sup>2</sup> lost everything". The Dutch realised that if the Company's concerns continued to be directed on the old principles, a complete decline was to be expected. It was not at all advisable for the Dutch to continue its war with Travancore. "Travancore, supposing she succumbed, would still not remain idle, but now that she has already become so large would each time recover and so keep the Company continually in travail<sup>3</sup>". The Dutch understood that "the Company in either case, whether Travancore alone remained in possession of

1 Memoirs of Moens.

2 Signatty refers to the King of Quilon and Kayamkulam.

3 Memoirs of Moens.

Malabar, or the Company continued to support the other kings, would equally have no hope of more pepper and equally have to bear excessive burdens." Therefore, to make a treaty profitable to both the Company and Travancore would be the best and the most certain plan for the Company. Moens writes: "The native chiefs should be allowed to attack one another although they should ruin each other, rather than we should put on our harness each time on their behalf." The Dutch realised that by making such a treaty with Travancore they would have to do with only one and not with so many. In any case it was better "to make their authority grow imperceptibly again by means of the new system than by sticking to the old, to see it gradually brought more and more to scorn."

These and other similar considerations induced the Company to accept the proposals of Travancore. The treaty was signed at Mavelikara on the 15th August 1753. The principal provisions of the treaty were:—Travancore and the Dutch should be mutual friends. Travancore should not allow any other European power to acquire a footing in its territories, but should leave undisturbed the English factories at Anjengo, Edava and Vizhinjam, but the English should not be allowed greater advantages than they were entitled to under existing treaties. The Dutch should assist Travancore both by land and sea in case of an attack from a foreign power. The Dutch should not in any way aid the enemies of Travancore or give them refuge; the two contracting powers should apprehend and deliver up deserters to each other. Travancore should restore to the Dutch such goods and men as belonged to them and might have been wrecked on the Travancore coast. Travancore should compel its subjects to fulfil mercantile obligations and contracts with the Dutch and abstain from levying any unusually heavy duty on the goods of the Dutch. The Dutch should renounce all their engagements with the Malabar princes and particularly with those against whom Travancore intended to go to war. The Dutch should supply Travancore with munitions of war annually to the value of 12,000 Rupees at cost price. Travancore should sell every year to the Dutch a stated quantity of pepper at certain fixed rates from territories then in possession of Travancore and also another stated quantity from those territories which Travancore might conquer thereafter.



It is said that the Dutch tried to include a clause in the treaty safeguarding the interests of Cochin. Day says "At a private interview at Mavelikara between the Cochin Raja and the Dutch on one hand and the Travancore Raja on the other the Dutch unsuccessfully attempted to have a clause inserted that should the Raja of Cochin or the Chettwaye island be attacked by Travancore such was to be considered equivalent to war." The object of this proposal was of course to save Cochin from falling a prey to the aggression of Travancore. The Dutch were naturally interested in Cochin "which was their first and oldest ally and also their nearest neighbour". But their endeavours were in vain. They had to be satisfied with an oral promise that "Travancore would live in friendship with the Raja of Cochin provided he gave no cause to the contrary." As Moens pertinently observed, it only meant that Travancore would remain friendly with Cochin as long as it suited him. The 9th clause of the treaty which stated "that the Company shall renounce all alliances with the other chiefs and nobles of Malabar with whom His Highness might desire to wage war, and shall not thwart him in this matter in any respect, give asylum to any such persons or oppose His Highness's enterprises", was extremely damaging to the Company's prestige. This clause allowed the Travancore Raja to carry out his ambitious schemes to any extent he pleased. By this the Dutch threw over their native allies and pledged themselves to leave them all to the mercy of Travancore. The Raja of Cochin bitterly complained about this to the Supreme Government at Batavia. "The Company has sacrificed an old friend and ally besides other Malabar kings and broken all contracts" he wrote. "When from the very beginning our ancestors tried to bring some kings under their sway and obedience, the Hon'ble Company continuously interfered; by observing this rule this kingdom got divided in so many parts and has therefore become unable to check its enemies. Now that the king of Travancore has become a powerful king, he has been able to coax the Hon'ble Company under promise to observe everything by means of which he bids fair to bring the other kings under his sway". This was a legitimate ventilation of a strong grievance. The Dutch had

1 Moens' Memoirs.

2 Cochin State Manual.

hitherto effectively prevented all political designs of Cochin and the Zamorin. But when it came to a question of their dealings with a powerful prince, they threw aside their old policy. It is to be doubted whether the Dutch had been driven to this necessity by force of circumstances or whether they had accepted this course for their own personal ends. The other clauses of the treaty prove that pecuniary motives had been at work. The treaty says that the Dutch should supply the Raja with various kinds of arms and ammunition to the value of Rupees 12,000, while they were to receive 1,500,000 pounds of pepper at Rs. 13 for every 100 pounds, and 10,000 pounds more out of the territories, to be conquered at Rs. 11 for every 100 pounds. This shows that the Company was anxious to strike a successful bargain with Travancore by betraying the interests of its old allies. Day writes: "Certainly giving up their former allies to an ancient enemy and providing arms to subdue their former friends for the sake of gaining 4 annas or six pence on every 25 pounds of pepper, was an inglorious act." If the object of the Dutch had been to gain more pepper at a cheap rate, they were defeated in that also as subsequent events clearly showed them. Marthanda Varma never furnished the quantity he promised even though the Dutch used to send many commissioners to Trivandrum to remind him of his treaty obligation. The Dutch offered him a higher price for pepper; even then the Raja was not prepared to favour them. The treaty brought neither credit nor money to the Dutch. The princes of Malabar soon discovered that the Company could no longer maintain any pretensions of political authority.

## CHAPTER V.

### TRAVANCORE AND THE DUTCH—(*Continued*)

THE Dutch knew pretty well that the peace of Mavelikara would naturally be an encouragement to Marthanda Varma for further aggressions. Gollennesse wrote "Although a peace should be concluded, one may very reasonably doubt whether it will be lasting; since he strongly insists upon a promise from the Hon'ble Company to remain neutral in case he goes to war with the Malabar chiefs, which sufficiently shows his ambitious intentions, and though it will be some time before his finances



are re-established and besides most of his picked Nairs have fallen, still I do not believe that he has altogether abandoned his high flying designs to make himself master of the whole of Malabar." What Collenesse apprehended was perfectly right.

The Raja of Cochin knew that Marthanda Varma's attention would immediately turn against him. He knew that he could not rely on the promise of friendship. In his letter dated 14th October 1753 to the Dutch Government at Batavia, he had expressed all his fears about the Travancore Raja. "He has no compassion on or charity towards neighbours", wrote the Cochin Raja "but plays with big men and small as a cat with mice, seeking nothing else but his own gains and profits." To add to the difficulties of the Cochin Raja, there were bitter factions in the royal family between the Thampans and the Raja. The Thampans belonged to the Chaliyur branch and they put forth a claim to the title of "Perimpatappu Mooppil". The Raja of Cochin refused to recognise the claims of the Thampans and therefore they sought the help of Marthanda Varma. The Thampans hoped that they could compel the Cochin Raja to recognise their titles through the help of a powerful ally. This was too good an opportunity for the ambitious Marthanda Varma to miss. He upheld the claims of the Thampans and informed the Cochin Raja through the Dutch that he was determined to see their claims fulfilled. The Thampans had concluded a marriage alliance with Vadakkumkur and therefore Vadakkumkur also supported their claim. The Travancore Raja led his forces to Alleppey, a place near Shertallay where the Cochin Raja had established his residence. In a small encounter that followed, the Cochin troops were driven back. Marthanda Varma had placed the Thampans at Karappuram under the title of "Perumpatappu Mooppil". The Raja of Cochin was in great difficulties and he started negotiations for peace with Marthanda Varma. A peace was concluded at Mavelikara between Cochin and Travancore. The Cochin Raja promised to hand over all the pepper in his territory to Travancore, taking only 500 candies for his use. Thiruvella and Harippad were to be under the Cochin Raja as before<sup>1</sup>, but Karappuram would be under Travancore. The thorny question about the claims of the Thampans was

<sup>1</sup> Marthanda Varma had seized the temple at Thiruvella before.

(Granthavari)

postponed to be decided in a further conference to be held at Vaikom three weeks later<sup>1</sup>. The Travancore Raja was not to proceed against the principalities of Vadakkumkur and Chempakasserry as these two were feudatories of Cochin. Cochin was to pay 25,000 rupees as war indemnity to Travancore.

Even though the treaty was drafted, it was not ratified by either party. Marthanda Varma did not pay any heed to this treaty and proceeded straight against the Chempakasserry Raja on the pretence that he had helped Kayamkulam in its war against Travancore. Chempakasserry (Ambalapuzha) was at that time governed by a line of Brahmin chiefs and the Raja at that time was a sagacious prince. His army was commanded by Mathu Panikkar, a Sudra knight of exceptional abilities. It is said that the Ambalapuzha soldiers used a special kind of arrows with poisonous tips. The Travancore army under Rama Iyen met the Ambalapuzha soldiers at Thottapally (an outpost on the southern frontiers of Ambalapuzha) where a deadly battle took place. Rama Iyen's troops could not resist the poisonous arrows of the enemy and he was obliged to retreat. Further, a panic seized his troops based on the rumour that Krishnaswamy, the deity of the Brahmin Raja of Ambalapuzha, was himself leading the troops against Travancore. The Hindu soldiers of Travancore could not be persuaded to fight against Ambalapuzha, and Rama Iyen had to wait till the arrival of De Lannoy with his artillery and Mussalman and Christian soldiers.

Meanwhile, Rama Iyen's intrigues succeeded in winning over Mathu Panikkar and Thekkedathu Bhattathiri, the principal officers of the Ambalapuzha army, to the Travancore side. They signed a truce with Rama Iyen, but the Raja continued to fight. He was easily defeated by the Travancore army and taken prisoner. Liberal presents were given to Mathu Panikkar and the Bhattathiri by Marthanda Varma. The Ambalapuzha Raja was removed to Trivandrum, and from there to Kodamalur, where he was kept as a prisoner.

Rama Iyen had taken possession of Changanassery, the capital of Thekkumkur. He was now ordered to march to the

<sup>1</sup> The peace conference at Mavelikara was held on the 28th Karkadagom 928 M.E. The conference at Vaikom was to meet on Chingom 20th 929 M.E. (Granthavari)



North and settle the northern boundary which had been extended up to the river Periyar. Practically all the countries south of the Dutch possession at Cranganore belonged to Travancore. Thus the Travancore territories surrounded those of Cochin, to whom of course Travancore was not a welcome neighbour.

The Raja of Ambalapuzha who was a prisoner at Kodamalur escaped from there and joined with the Rajas of Thekkumkur and Vadakkumkur. They made busy preparations for recovering their lost possessions and sought the co-operation of Cochin. They secured the support of Paliath Achen and other nobles like Kodacherry Karthav and Koratti Kaimal. They persuaded the Cochin Raja to join sides with them to stop the aggression of Marthanda Varma. Many Nair chiefs from Ambalapuzha, Kayamkulam, Changanassery, Ettumanoor and other places joined this big anti-Travancore league. Marthanda Varma had alienated the vast majority of the Malabar chieftains by his aggressive policy of expansion. And all of them were burning with a spirit of revenge. It was the hostility towards Marthanda Varma that drew all these chieftains together; the Cochin Raja was to become the leader of this formidable combination. They collected a fleet of native boats and made busy preparations gathering rifles, guns and ammunitions. While these preparations were going on, the Dutch Governor at Cochin conveyed private information about this to the Travancore Raja. The conduct of the Dutch in this affair is really unintelligible. Cochin had been their traditional ally, and Travancore their inveterate enemy. The fall of Travancore would have been more advantageous to the Dutch than to Cochin. But the Dutch, after the treaty of Mavelikara, were following a cowardly policy of appeasement with Travancore, anxious to cultivate its friendship. By secretly informing the Travancore Raja about the preparations of his enemy, the Dutch perhaps imagined that they could gain his favour and friendship.

Marthanda Varma made busy preparations and proceeded with his army to Mavelikara. As the Maharaja was slightly indisposed, the prince together with Rama Iyen and De Lannoy was ordered to lead the expedition. The confederates landed at Porakkad and immediately a sanguinary battle followed. The well-disciplined army of Travancore with its strong equipment proved its superiority over its enemies. Many soldiers of the

Cochin army were slain, and Paliath Achen, Kodacherry Karthav and several other nobles were taken prisoners. The Kayamkulam Nairs who took part in the war were severely punished by Rama Iyen.

Rama Iyen proceeded to the north through Ambalapuzha, Alleppey and Ariad. He seized the Cochin Raja's palace at Madathumkara<sup>1</sup> about five miles north of Alleppey. The Madathumkara palace was not occupied by any member of the royal family; but it was guarded by a handful of sepoys. The Dalawa easily captured the palace and proceeded towards Arookutty. The rapid advance of the Travancore forces alarmed the Raja of Cochin. The concerted attempt of the Malabar chieftains had miserably failed and he knew that Rama Iyen would press his victories into the frontiers of Cochin. He immediately sent a messenger to Trivandrum apologising for his past conduct and suing for peace. The Dutch Governor at Cochin also requested the Maharaja to stop the further advance of Rama Iyen. Marthanda Varma accordingly ordered Rama Iyen to return to Mavelikara. Arookutty was made the northern limit of Travancore and it continues to be so even to-day.

It is interesting to examine why the ambitious Marthanda Varma did not venture on a conquest of Cochin. If Rama Iyen had not been ordered to return from Arookutty, he would have easily hoisted the Travancore flag in Cochin. The part played by Cochin in the Ambalapuzha war was sufficient excuse for an invasion of that country. The Dutch would not have interfered on behalf of Cochin even though they knew that "no ruler would do better or be more suitable than the king of Cochin" to strengthen their interests. "He is our oldest ally and sufficiently rooted into us" the Dutch Governor wrote, "his territory lies in view and almost within range of our walls; he even shares with us the taxes of the town, was faithful to the Company when Cochin was taken and exposed himself for our sake to almost total ruin". But in spite of all these, the Dutch would not have supported him in a war with Travancore.

It was the pet ambition of Rama Iyen to carry his victories to the heart of Cochin. It is said that at the time of his death

<sup>1</sup> The original seat of the Cochin Rajas is considered to be Madathumkara. Hence their title "Mada Bhoopathy".



he told the Elaya Raja that his only disappointment in life was that he was not permitted to conquer and annex the whole of the Cochin Raja's territories and add that Raja's name to the Travancore pension list. But it was prudence that advised Marthanda Varma to desist from this project. "Should it be asked why, being so successful in everything, he has not extended his conquests further and completely subjugated the king of Cochin", writes Moens, "the answer is that he would certainly have done this and has it still in his mind; but Travancore is far-seeing and careful; he knows that the conservation of his conquests requires as much prudence as their acquisition; he lies in wait; he looks out for opportunities and seldom lets any chance of obtaining an advantage slip by". As Moens rightly observes, it was to his advantage to keep quiet at that time as there was the legitimate chance of a sweeping invasion of all territories by Hyder Ali. Therefore Marthanda Varma thought it wise to draw the line at Arookutty.

Peace with Cochin was soon broken on the question of a tract of land known as Karappuram. The Cochin Raja pressed his claim on Karappuram and Paliath Achen and Kodacherry Karthav were collecting an army to defend his claim. Rama Iyen immediately proceeded from Mavelikara with his powerful army and drove the Cochin troops beyond Arookutty. The Cochin Raja finding himself helpless again sued for peace. He agreed to cede Karappuram to Travancore.

As the Maharaja was adding on territories after territories there were violent outbreaks of rebellion in different parts of his dominions. In 1754 there was an organised insurrection by the inhabitants of the northern countries of Ambalapuzha, Changanassery, Kottayam and Ettumanoor. They were instigated by the Zamorin and also by the deposed Rajas of Thekkumkur and Vadakkumkur. Rama Iyen advanced to the north to suppress the rebellion; but his attempts were of no avail. He requested the Maharaja to go over to these places personally to bring the situation under control. The rebellion subsided on the arrival of the Maharaja. But Marthanda Varma took precautionary measures to root out the trouble and sought the help of Hyder Ali of Mysore. Hyder Ali promptly replied that he would send a strong army from Dindigul. But the mere rumour that Hyder was coming to the help of the Maharaja was sufficient to induce the people to give

up their rebellion. The Maharaja, finding that Hyder's help was not necessary, later wrote to him declining his offer. The Maharaja was wise in not availing himself of Hyder's promised help. That would have provided a handle for Hyder to carry out his ambitious designs in Malabar. The Maharaja's reply declining his promised help was not pleasing to the Mysore ruler. He understood the drift of this reply and thus the first seed of enmity between Travancore and Mysore was sown.

The conduct of the Maharaja in inviting foreign mercenaries to suppress the rebellion in his own State has been severely criticised as both impolitic and unpatriotic. His plan of getting the help of Hyder Ali was no doubt imprudent; though the Maharaja soon realised it and did not avail himself of the help. But Hyder was made of the same calibre as Marthanda Varma, and he could not be easily put off by the Maharaja's arts. The remedy which the Maharaja sought was more disastrous than the disease; and once it was sought, it was not easy to be shaken off. It was the beginning of the series of wars in which Travancore was involved in the next decade. It was not the first time that Marthanda Varma was invoking foreign aid for the management of his affairs in Malabar. It was at the root of his policy from beginning to end.

Marthanda Varma was fortunate in securing the able services of Rama Iyen,<sup>1</sup> an unscrupulous general, but a statesman of unparalleled merits. In scheming and intrigue no one was

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<sup>1</sup> According to the high authority of Mahakavi Ullor S. Parameswara Iyer, Rama Iyen was a native of Rajamannarkoil in Tinnevely District, and his father had settled down in South Travancore. He was brought to the notice of Maharaja Rama Varma, the predecessor of Marthanda Varma, and by dint of his precocious intelligence rose to important places of service in the State, first as Samprathy or Head clerk of the palace and finally to the post of Dalawa which then combined the functions of prime minister and commander-in-chief. Besides his martial exploits and administrative abilities Rama Iyen was a patron of letters and himself a member of a learned family. He renovated the temple at Aruvikkara in 1745. A Sanskrit poem 'The Chathaka Sandesa' written about 1785 describes the fort at Quilon that he built as being the very incarnation of his valour. His brother Gopala Iyen also worked up his way to the post of Dalawa which he held for a number of years, (1768-76).

(Vide article on "Some new facts on Rama Iyen Dalawa, the warrior Statesman of Travancore" by Ullor S. Parameswara Iyer, in the I. H. R. Commission proceedings, Vol. XIX. 1944, Pages 141 to 42).



a match to Rama Iyen and in carrying out the designs of his master effectively no one could excel him. Visakam Thirunal Rama Varma Maharaja of Travancore (1055 to 1060 M.E.) observed. "He (Marthanda Varma) was served by one of the ablest of ministers. Sully did not serve Henry IV of France more nobly and faithfully than Rama Iyen did Marthanda Varma. .... Rama Iyen was unrelenting, unsparing and often unscrupulous to his master's enemies, but his self was merged completely in that of his master. He was as fearless in the council room as he was in the battle field. With such a master as his right hand and with a strong will, abiding patience and indomitable courage, the Raja not only won back what his predecessors had lost but subjugated one after another the neighbouring chiefs who were a perpetual source of trouble."

It was the great ambition of Marthanda Varma to destroy the old feudal nobility of the Nairs and to build up on its debris a powerful and efficient autocracy. This was so deadly against the cherished sentiments of the people of Malabar that it took many years for even Marthanda Varma to establish it on a secure basis. Mr. K. M. Panikar in his "Malabar and the Dutch", severely criticises Marthanda Varma as being entirely devoid of a feeling for "Kerala Dharma." "The basis of his statecraft" says Mr. Panikar, "was the utilisation of foreign help for subduing the chieftains opposed to him. .... His autocratic state was to be supported by the twin pillars of a mercenary army and an alien bureaucracy, both hostile to the population of Malabar and unsympathetic towards its institutions". The ethics of utilising foreign help for suppressing enemies need not be questioned at all. When once Marthanda Varma was bent upon subduing his enemies, it mattered little whether he depended entirely on his army or hired soldiers from outside. It was open to all princes to secure help from outside and it was not any respect for the feeling of "Kerala Dharma" that prevented them from doing it. The truth is that they had neither the skill nor the courage of Marthanda Varma to venture on such schemes. No doubt the numerous chieftains and princes who were subdued by Marthanda Varma considered his action as a violation of their legitimate rights and liberties. But the presence of innumerable independent principalities, hardly able to

subsist by their revenues or maintain good rule was certainly not conducive to the happiness of the people. It may be a fact that the people highly resented the high-handed actions of Marthanda Varma. But they could not understand the necessity or advantages of a political unification. It would have been a Herculean task for any prince of the 18th century to induce by peaceful means the different principalities to merge into a common entity. Conquest was the only means for creating a united and strong Travancore and certainly in this case the end justifies the means. It would be wrong to accuse Marthanda Varma of any violation of "Kerala Dharma". "Kerala Dharma" does not consist in the perpetuation of a highly incompetent and undesirable political system. Perhaps it may be difficult to justify on strict moral grounds the treatment he meted out to the Ettuveetil Pillamars. But Marthanda Varma was a practical statesman. He realised fully well, and rightly too, that the total annihilation of the recalcitrant nobility was the *sin qua non* of an orderly government. And this soldier-king with a "heart to resolve a head to contrive and a hand to execute" set about his task in the most thorough manner possible. And its result was that he raised Travancore from its insignificance to the forefront of Malabar politics. The great achievement of Marthanda Varma was that he carved out a powerful state from out of an agglomeration of weak principalities and made it an effective bulwark against foreign aggression. "Thus ended the the dominion of the petty Malabar sovereigns and princes, thus was humanity avenged and thus were the crimes punished and licentiousness suppressed by which the country had been distracted ever since the 10th century."<sup>1</sup>

The greatness of Marthanda Varma lies in the fact that his conquests kept pace with consolidation. After finishing his conquests he brought about extensive reforms in the military and revenue administration of the State. Captain De Lannoy was appointed as the commander-in-chief of the Travancore forces. He had already in his employ a body of soldiers trained in western methods of warfare. The Maharaja realised that a well equipped and well disciplined army was highly indispensable for the administration of his extensive dominions. The Maharaja's palace at Padmanabhapuram was strongly fortified and

<sup>1</sup> Fra Bartolomeo "A voyage to the East Indies."



Udayagiri was converted into a strong military establishment. Batteries were erected on the sea coast at different places and old forts were renovated and strengthened. Rama Iyen was deputed to organise the revenue administration of the State. A commerce department was established and pandakasalas or store-houses were erected in different parts of the State. The lands annexed by the State were assessed and their administration was established on a sound financial basis. Many public works were undertaken and numerous palaces were constructed. Roads and canals were made to facilitate commerce and communications.

The important role played by Marthanda Varma in deciding the fate of the Dutch in Malabar can hardly be exaggerated. To Marthanda Varma goes the credit of shattering the Dutch East India Company's usurped position as the sovereign authority in Malabar. Marthanda Varma was able to compel the Dutch to discard their old system of Malabar administration and to adopt a new policy whose chief feature was to keep friends with Travancore. Moens wrote, "As long as the Company sticks to its present peaceable policy, friendship with this king is and must remain of utmost necessity." But the Dutch were always apprehensive about the political designs of Marthanda Varma. The letter from the Amsterdam Council to Batavia, dated 13th October 1755, stated "When we reflect on the ambitious designs of this prince and his behaviour from time to time even with regard to the Company, we are more and more strengthened in our belief that not much reliance can be placed upon the aforementioned Raja. For this reason we once more recommend our administrators always to follow carefully the enterprises of the prince, to be on their guard at every turn of events". The Dutch authorities expressed the same fears about Marthanda Varma in another letter dated 4th October 1756. "With reference to the king of Travancore whose progress we cannot behold with indifferent eyes, we are constantly in fear that if the said king should conquer the kings of Cochin, Birkancur and Thekkumkur, he would become a dangerous neighbour to the Company; for this reason it would be desirable that the combined arms of the said three kings may be so prosperous that the one party could be kept in check by the other, and the king of Travancore thwarted in the execution of his ambitious designs, of which he has already given diverse indi-

cations and which therefore require every attention". The Dutch earnestly wished that Travancore had not become so exceedingly large and Cochin so small so that the latter might balance the former. Marthanda Varma had convinced the Dutch that they could no longer play the convenient game of adjusting the balance of power in Malabar to their advantage. And this was no small achievement. Marthanda Varma will ever remain as one of the most outstanding figures in Malabar history.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE ZAMORIN AND THE DUTCH

THE failure of the Dutch against Travancore had many disastrous consequences. It encouraged all the Malabar chieftains to throw aside the authority of the Dutch. The Malabar princes discovered that their interests had been given up to Travancore by the treaty of 1753, and they were therefore seeking for new alliances to strengthen their position. The Zamorin of Calicut who for long had enjoyed the position of the premier prince of Malabar was not slow to miss this opportunity. When the Dutch first came to Malabar the most powerful prince they found on the coast was the Zamorin. It was with the help of the Zamorin that they established their power in Cochin. But the Dutch were always thwarting the political ambitions of the Zamorin on the plea of protecting their allies. By the treaty of 1717 the Zamorin had been compelled to cede Chettwaye and Pappanivattam to the Dutch and to allow them freedom of trade in his dominions. But ever since the surrender of Chettwaye, the Zamorin had been trying to restore it to his kingdom. Chettwaye was so vital to his communications in the south that he could not afford to lose it. The Zamorin tried peaceful means to win back the lost territories. But the Dutch were not prepared to return what they had gained after so much of fighting. The hostility between the Dutch and the Zamorin was becoming keener. Chettwaye was not the only bone of contention. The Dutch wanted to prevent the establishment of English influence in the Zamorin's territories and they were taking every possible step to achieve this end. The Zamorin was meanwhile trying to strengthen his position by forming alliances. In 1728 he sent Padmanabha Pattar to Kayamkulam, Vadakkumkur, Thekkumkur and other places to negotiate alli-



ances with them. The main object of this alliance was to bring down the power of the Dutch and conquer Cochin. The Dutch also were not slow in concerting measures for the suppression of the Zamorin's power. In 1735 they occupied Inamakal and fortified it. But they continued to maintain their appearance of friendship with the Zamorin; therefore it did not result in the commencement of hostilities. The Raja of Cochin invaded the lands of Chittoor Namboodiri in 1750, but even this did not result in the outbreak of war. In 1742 a serious dispute arose between the Cochin Raja and the Zamorin about the management of the Triparayar temple and the heir-apparent of Calicut who was an inveterate enemy of the Dutch invaded Cochin. This prince, Gollennesse says, used to boast that he intended 'to live and die as a mortal enemy of the Dutch.' He made a sudden raid upon the kingdom of Cochin without any previous declaration of war and captured the territory known as Mangalam. At that time the prince received information about the arrival of Van Imhoff and suddenly stopped all hostilities. The Zamorin disowned his responsibility for this war and declared that everything had been done without his orders. A peace was concluded on the 3rd December 1742 in the presence of two deputies of the Company. The Dutch "seriously warned the king of Cochin to avoid carefully every occasion of new disturbances and rather to bear and digest a small injustice than bring greater one upon himself".

Even though a temporary peace was signed between Cochin and Calicut in 1742, the Zamorin was making busy preparations for carrying out his great political designs. The Zamorin was watching the progress of Travancore and the steady decline of the Company's power. "He found that he could insult the Dutch with impunity, as although they sent remonstrances, these were unsupported by physical force".

In 1752 the Zamorin attacked Inamakal. The next year they took Pappanivattom and obliged the Dutch to retire to Cranganore with the loss of eight pieces of artillery. The Zamorin had compelled many petty chieftains to recognise him as the overlord of Malabar. The Cochin Raja had always refused

1 Gollennesse. *Memoirs*.

2 Day. : *Land of the Perumals*.

to acknowledge the Zamorin's suzerainty. The Zamorin ventured on his aggressive scheme of conquest and invaded Cochin with a large army. In the meantime, Marthanda Varma was steadily extending his dominions northwards. Attacked on both sides by powerful enemies, the Cochin Raja looked up to the Dutch for help. He wrote many letters to the Dutch at Cochin and Batavia reminding them of their treaty obligations to protect Cochin from outside attacks. But the Dutch were not inclined to lend active assistance to Cochin. The Cochin Raja realised that his kingdom would be reduced to extinction if he did not make a diplomatic move to secure a powerful ally. An alliance with the Zamorin was clearly impossible and therefore Cochin turned to Travancore for help. The leader of these negotiations was Paliath Komi Achen, a far-seeing diplomat of exceptional abilities. He had been taken prisoner at the battle of Ambalapuzha and taken to Trivandrum. He had realised that an alliance with Travancore would be to the best interests of his country and had cultivated the friendship of Marthanda Varma and the Elaya Raja during his stay at Trivandrum. He knew perfectly well that depending on Dutch help would be extremely foolish and persuaded the Cochin Raja to come to an agreement with Marthanda Varma. The Cochin Raja came to Mavelikara where he had an interview with Marthanda Varma. A peace was signed between the two princes in 1757. The Raja of Cochin declared perpetual alliance with Travancore and voluntarily ceded all the places which the Travancore army had conquered. He relinquished all his claims over the petty principalities of the north with the exception of Alangad and Parur. He promised to render no help to the enemies of Travancore and to refrain from all intercourse with the deposed Rajas of Ambalapuzha, Thekkumkur and Vadakkumkur. The deposed Raja of Ambalapuzha was permitted to stay at Trichur.

The Zamorin was steadily scoring victories at the expense of Cochin and the Dutch. In 1756 the Zamorin invaded the territories round about Cranganore. The Zamorin's troops strengthened themselves at Pappanivattam throwing up earth works at 'Tripoonatty' holding posts at Madilakam. They erected palisades at the river bank closing the passages and preventing supplies from reaching the Dutch garrison at Madilakam. The Zamorin with 5000 Nairs advanced close to the Cranganore fort



and overran Parur. The Dutch in Cochin were greatly alarmed at the progress of the Zamorin. The garrison at Cochin consisted of only 138 Europeans and 75 Topasses.<sup>1</sup> They enlisted some natives and wrote to Ceylon to send immediate reinforcements. But the Ceylon Government could not spare any soldiers at that time. The Dutch then requested the Rajas of Chettwaye, Ayroor and Cranganore to stop the advance of the Zamorin's troops. But these chieftains had already realised the futility of their alliance with the Dutch and they declined to comply with their request. On the other hand they entered into alliances with the Zamorin. "The petty princes perceiving the Dutch no longer protected them against Travancore had recourse to the Zamorin, whom they persuaded to enter into hostilities against the company. The Dutch commander applied to the Raja of Travancore for help, but he replied that "he had told the Zamorin's ambassadors that they ought to advise their sovereign to stop." Perhaps the Travancore Raja did not want to interfere in the war at that stage. He knew that when the Dutch would be hard pressed they would be compelled to beg his assistance and then he would carry out his schemes of conquest as he pleased.

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<sup>1</sup> *Topasses* A name used in the 17th or 18th century for dark-skinned half-caste Portuguese Christians. It is held that the word is a corruption of the Turkish 'Top-chi', (a gunner). Various other derivations have also been given. Thus Orme and following him Wilson, had derived the word from 'Topy' 'a hat' and held it to mean 'hatman' or 'Topy-walas'. Still another curious derivation is from the word 'Dubash', i.e., interpreter between the Europeans and the Indians.

Possibly the first derivation is the correct one, because European gunners, Italians, Levantines, or Ottomans, were employed as artillery men and for casting guns, from very early in the 16th century. Portuguese gunmen, i.e., Top-chis (Top-khana artillery department) were employed by the Zamorin of Calicut, as is frequently mentioned in the Annals of Correa who went over to India in 1512 and remained in the country as late as 1561. Ref.:- "Three Voyages of Vas Co da Gama and his Viceroyalty" of Gaspar Correa. Translated by E. J. Stanley.

The term *Topaz* or *Topas* was frequently in use from about 1670 in the records of the English factories. Gradually in course of time it came to be applied to the sons of European men and black woman who affected European dress and wore European hat. According to the high authority of James Mill, it denoted the Indo Portuguese, either the mixed descendants of Portuguese and Indian parents or converts to the Portuguese from the Indian faith. They were also known as *Mestizos* (literally of mixed blood).

While the Dutch and the Zamorin were carrying on hostilities, peace talks also were indulged in. The main idea of the Zamorin was not to suppress the power of the Dutch. He would have readily welcomed their help for carrying out his designs over others. The Zamorin was also careful to prevent an alliance between Travancore and the Dutch, which he knew would only strengthen the power of Travancore. Further there were frightful rumours about the imminent invasion of Calicut by Hyder Ali. Therefore the Zamorin thought it would be a wise step to negotiate peace with the Dutch. On October 18th 1756 the Zamorin sent a Jew—Ezekiel Rabbi—to the Dutch to arrange terms for peace. He promised to give the Dutch 2,000 candies<sup>1</sup> of pepper yearly if they would join sides with him against Travancore. The Dutch did not want to wage a war with Travancore. They sent a reply that as soon as the lands which the Zamorin had conquered were restored to them, they would consider the offer of peace. They also stated that the new treaty should be on the basis of the old one, i.e., the treaty of 1717. The Dutch did not want to commit themselves to support any party in haste. Before doing that they wanted to ascertain what terms either party would offer. Governor Cunes in his letter to Batavia stated: "Should Travancore refuse to join us, it becomes the more urgent that your Excellencies should furnish sufficient forces to enable us to assume a commanding position, merely to overawe these Malabar chiefs and thus to continue on the terms of most intimate friendship with Travancore, without the slightest room for any misunderstanding." • He also added that "should the Zamorin give an opportunity for a renewal of friendship with him, on reasonable and honourable terms, it is advisable to at once close with them." Thus the Dutch were trying to make the best use of these opportunities.

Meanwhile the Zamorin had occupied the major part of Cochin's territories. He could capture Inamakkal without firing a shot. From there he advanced to Trichur which was very poorly defended. The handful of soldiers he found there were driven out and Trichur was made the capital of the Zamorin's territories in Cochin. Many local chieftains voluntarily surrendered before the Zamorin. Chankarakanda Kaimal, Chittur

<sup>1</sup> 'Cochy Raja Charitram' says 4,000 candies were offered. Ref:—Vol II P. 299.



Nampoothiri and Velos Nambiar invited the Zamorin to take possession of Oorakam, Arattupuzha and Mapranam.<sup>1</sup> The Zamorin's forces seized the Mullorkara fort belonging to Paliam and compelled many local chiefs to recognise his suzerainty. In 1758 the Zamorin's forces attacked Chennamangalam, the seat of the Paliath Achens and drove away the Paliam troops. Paliath Achen and the members of his family were obliged to leave Chennamangalam and settle in Vypeen. This was the most critical period in the history of Cochin. The Cochin Raja had been deprived of the major part of his territories. The majority of the Raja's feudatories had joined sides with the Zamorin. Even some of the members of the Paliam family were thinking of going over to the Zamorin. But Komi Achen, the Paliam chief, stood loyal to the Raja and tried his best to strengthen the Raja's power in Cochin.

When the Zamorin was thus at the zenith of his power, he concluded a treaty with the Dutch by which he agreed to give up Matilakam, Puttenchira, Chettwaye and Pappanivattam. He also promised to pay a war indemnity of 65,000 Rupees to the Dutch. It seems strange that the Zamorin should sign a treaty of this kind with the Dutch when he was victorious in all his operations. Probably he feared a combined attack of Travancore and the Dutch. Perhaps it was his idea to offset the immediate prospects of a Travancore invasion by a treaty with the Dutch. "The Zamorin had no fear of the Dutch; he knew what their strength was and where their weakness lay. The immediate crisis tided over, and the advance of the Travancoreans stopped, he thought he could at his own convenience recover Chettwaye"<sup>2</sup>

The Cochin Raja knew that he could not resist the advance of the Zamorin without help from outside. Therefore he retired to Ernakulam with his troops. The only effective help he could hope to secure at that time was from Travancore. In 1758 the great Marthanda Varma died and he was succeeded by his illustrious nephew Rama Varma. Rama Varma had been trained and brought up by Marthanda Varma and he proved himself to be a worthy successor of his great uncle. As heir-apparent he had closely associated himself with matters of state administra-

<sup>1</sup> Cochy Rajya Charitram by K. P. P. Menon, Vol. II. P. 305.

<sup>2</sup> K. V. Krishna Iyer. Zamorins of Calicut.

tion and his policy as king was strictly in accordance with that of his predecessor. His long rule extending over a period of 40 years, characterised by wisdom, justice and kindness, was extremely popular and won him the title of "Dharma Raja". He was endowed with great natural gifts and administrative abilities, which stood him in good stead under trying circumstances.

The Cochin Raja sent Paliath Achen to Travancore to solicit the Maharaja's help for checking the aggression of the Zamorin. A fresh treaty<sup>1</sup> was signed on the 26th December 1761 based on the provisions of the former treaty. The Cochin Raja promised to bear all expenses that will be incurred in connection with war against the Zamorin. He relinquished his claims over the Karappuram territories.

At the time of the signing of the treaty Karappuram was a part of Travancore, but the clause about the surrender of Cochin's claims over that territory was purposely included to prevent all future disputes about it. It is stated that the Travancore Raja hesitated to place full confidence in the Cochin chief and delayed to take action against the Zamorin. Therefore the Cochin Raja sent his nephew to Trivandrum to swear his allegiance to the treaty<sup>2</sup>.

1 "..... You inform me that the Samoory has entered your country with his troops, expelled your people and taken possession of it and you desire me to assist you by sending my troops at my own expense in order to enable you to recover possession of your country by expelling the Samoory's troops from that part which extends north as far as Poocoidah river and east as far as Chittoor river as also the districts you formerly possessed in Vellapanad Karee. If I should assist you and put you in possession of this country you in return agree to make over to me the district Karappuram extending to the south of Pampolly river and north of Alipie and also Paroor and Alangadu with all their rights etc ..... I will send my troops to be paid by me and will use every exertion and render all the assistance in my power to defeat the Samoory's troops and restore your country".

Malabar Manual Vol. III. P. 112.

2 A perpetual alliance was solemnly declared before the deity at Suchindram. It was as follows:—"We, Veera Kerala Varma Raja, born under the star Rohini of Perumpatappu Swaroopam declare in the presence of Sthanu Moorthy, deity of Suchindram, that neither we nor our heirs will do or cause to be done any act against Sree Padmanabhadasa Vanchi Pala Rama Varma Kulasekhara Perumal Raja of the Trippappoor Swaroopam, born under the star of Karthiga or against his heirs. We will not join with those who are his enemies, neither will we correspond with them. Truly resolved and solemnly declared on the feet of Sthanumoorthy."

(Sankunyan Menon, History of Travancore), Chapter III, P. 189.



According to the terms of this treaty the Maharaja sent his troops to the north to assist the Cochin Raja. The Travancore forces were under the command of Aiyyappan Marthanda Pillay, the Dalawa, and General De Llanoy. The first thing they undertook was the construction of the famous 'Travancore Lines,'<sup>1</sup> extending from Cranganore to the foot of the ghats. The construction of a northern barrier was found to be imperatively necessary as there was the threat of a Mysorean invasion of Travancore. The fortifications were constructed under the supervision of De Llanoy and the Dalawa who were specially commissioned for this by the Maharaja. The Maharaja had also a conference with the Cochin Raja at Annamanaday. As many parts of the barrier had to pass through Cochin, the Cochin Raja ceded these lands to Travancore.

In 1762 the Travancore troops under the command of De Llanoy formed into three divisions and attacked the Zamorin's possessions at Cranganore Parur and Verapoly. The Zamorin was driven back from Cochin and the Cochin Raja was re-instated in his original possessions. The Dalawa even contemplated an attack of Calicut, the Zamorin's capital. But by that time the Zamorin had sued for peace and the Maharaja ordered his minister to return. The imminent danger of Hyder's invasion had induced

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1 "They (Travancore Lines) consisted of an imposing earthen rampart, not very high, extending over thirty miles in length from Palliport along a great portion of the Cochin State on a strip of land ceded by the Cochin Raja which served as check upon the Zamorin's advances. Just flanking their western extremity were the Dutch forts of Cranganore and Ayakottah. The lines were fronted by a ditch on the North. Flanking towers were placed at intervals and a fort was constructed at the western extremity."

(Travancore State Manual, Vol. I.) Ch. VI. P. 372.

Day gives the following accounts about the Travancore Lines:—

"They commenced at Yellingayree to the eastward of which the hills were supposed to afford some defence. They then extended 24 miles to the westward and terminated at Jacotay—a name which was occasionally employed to designate the whole work. The latter consisted of a rather strong embankment and parapet of earth, the whole measuring at the highest part above fifteen feet, but the elevation was not always the same. The ditch was generally speaking about half that depth, and two or three feet broad. An Abattis composed of a bamboo hedge was planted, which in some places where it has been carefully preserved may still be seen flourishing. Along its inner side ran a broad and level road, and scattered along this at irregular intervals were forty two small works."

both the princes to stop their hostilities and seek friendship with one another. Further, the Travancore Raja had no personal reasons for carrying on the war against the Zamorin. His only obligation was to restore the Cochin Raja's territories, and having fulfilled that he was ready for peace. The Zamorin came to Padmanabhapuram to meet the Maharaja and a treaty of alliance was concluded in 1765 (26th Idavom 938 M. E.). The Zamorin promised to maintain perpetual friendship and fidelity with Travancore and to pay a war indemnity of 150,000 Rupees. This treaty protected the interests of Cochin by providing that it should be left unmolested by the Zamorin. Any dispute that might arise between the Zamorin and Cochin was to be settled by the mediation of Travancore. The Zamorin and the Maharaja promised to help each other in case of a foreign attack.

After re-instating the Cochin Raja in his restored dominions, the Travancore Raja opened up Alleppey to foreign trade, an event which was greatly ruinous to the interests of the Dutch. The Dutch had formerly prevented the Raja of Porakkad from doing this on the ground that they would not have control over the exportation of cinnamon and pepper. But now the Dutch were not in a position to check the Raja of Travancore. This event made Travancore master of the whole country from Cranganore to Cape Comorin.

In the war between the Zamorin and the Raja of Cochin many of the feudatories and nobles of Cochin had joined sides with the Zamorin. The Zamorin's authority had been recognised by many local chieftains of Cochin and they were actively supporting the Calicut troops in their war with Cochin. In Travancore the power of the Nair nobility had been completely broken by the iron measures of Marthanda Varma and therefore there was no chance of any popular insurrection there. The Cochin Raja also wanted to secure his position on a similar basis and sought the help of the Travancore Raja in this respect. The principal leaders among the rebellious nobles were brought to the temple at Thiruvanchikulam and compelled to swear an oath of fidelity. They promised to be loyal to the Rajas of Cochin and Travancore and never to entertain any enemies of these princes in their territories. They undertook to break off all their relations with the Zamorin, and to support the Raja against the Zamorin's aggression. The second chief of Paliyam had taken an



active part in the rebellions. He was also compelled to swear an oath of loyalty to Cochin and Travancore. He repented very much for all his youthful misdemeanours and prayed that he should be forgiven and protected by the Rajas. He promised to be obedient to his brother, the first Lord of Paliyam who has always been loyal to his master. The properties of the rebellious chieftains were forfeited to the State and all their titles and claims were abolished.

The part played by the Travancore Raja in annihilating the power of Cochin nobility is very significant. He saved the Cochin Raja from the aggression of his hereditary enemy the Zamorin, and also from his own feudal nobles. The Rajas of Cochin were the feudatories of the Zamorins when the Portuguese first came to Malabar. During the Portuguese hegemony in Malabar, Cochin had secured its independence from the domination of Calicut. But ever since, the two States had been in perpetual warfare. The Cochin Raja had never been able to suppress the power of his feudal chiefs. Like the Pillamars and Madampies of Travancore, these nobles had been enjoying more or less sovereign authority in their own villages. The interference of Travancore brought to a close the war with Zamorin which was going on for about 250 years and also destroyed the power and influence of the local nobility.

Even though matters were amicably settled between the three States of Travancore, Cochin and Calicut, a quarrel broke out between the Dutch and Travancore over the question of the possession of the Muthukunnu islands. According to the treaty of 1758 between the Dutch and the Zamorin, the latter had promised to pay a war indemnity of 65,000 Rupees. By the year 1762 more than half the amount had been paid by the Zamorin in different instalments. But there still remained a balance of 30,000 Rupees. As the Zamorin was involved in expensive wars with Cochin and Travancore he could not pay the amount due to the Company. He mortgaged to the Dutch the islands of Muthukunnu which he had previously taken from Cochin as a security for the amount due to the Dutch. The Dutch resolved to take these islands as security on an estimated value of 16,000 Rupees. If the Zamorin failed to pay his arrears within a period of two years, the Dutch were to take possession of the islands. When the stipulated period was over, the Dutch resolved to

appropriate these islands as the Zamorin had failed to fulfil his obligations. But Travancore disapproved of this transaction and laid claim to the island on behalf of the Raja of Cochin. Moens the Dutch Governor, says that before entering into the transaction, the Dutch had consulted the Travancore Raja and obtained his permission in a conference with him at Shertallai. The Travancore Raja pressed his claims on behalf of Cochin and used to issue 'interdicts' preventing sowing and harvest in the islands. Matters went on like this till 1767 when the Dutch sent troops from Changanore to take forcible possession of the islands. Since then no more 'interdicts' were laid on the islands and no other "improper claims" were pressed on by Travancore. But special orders were given by the Dutch authorities about this affair as they were always afraid of the intention of "Travancore who seldom forgets anything but always knows well how to make the best of his chances." They knew that "Travancore will not so easily let this claim slip away from him, but when occasion offers will formulate it again." Both Travancore and Cochin repeatedly sought the permission of the Dutch Governor to build a strong fort there in order to check the Mysorean invasions. The Dutch Governor was aware of the usefulness of the fortifications in these parts for common defence; still he was not prepared to trust the intentions of Travancore in his request for permission to construct a fort in Muthukunnu islands. He was afraid that if the Travancore Raja was allowed to build a fortress there, he may later press his claim for the whole islands because he knew very well that "the Malabarists seldom let slip claims which they have once made, but keep them always in reserve in order to make them serve as often as an opportunity offers."

## CHAPTER VII

### THE MYSOREAN INVASIONS

THE Mysorean invasion under Hyder Ali was the most significant event which affected the history of Malabar in general and the fortunes of the Dutch in particular. We have already referred to Marthanda Varma's invocation of help from Hyder and its political significance. We have also seen how the Malabar princes and the Dutch were living in great dread of an imminent invasion from Hyder.



Hyder Ali is said to have been a descendant of the tribe to which the Prophet Muhammad belonged. The date of his ancestor's migration from Mecca to India cannot be precisely fixed. Neither is it a historical fact which can be accepted without dispute. But the details about his ancestors' settlement in the Deccan are well known and authentic. Hyder's great grand-father Wali Muhammad, migrated from North India to Gulburga in the Nizam's dominions. His father—Nadim Saheb—joined the service of the Mysore ruler and steadily rising to prominence became the Governor of a province and the captain of ten thousand horses. Hyder commenced his military career as an officer of a corps of sepoys under his father at Devanahalli in 1749. He distinguished himself as an efficient soldier at the siege of Devanahalli and his conspicuous abilities attracted the attention of Nanjaraja, the Sarvadhikari of Mysore, who secured for him a command of fifty cavalry and two hundred infantry.

The government of Mysore was at that time in the hands of the two brothers Devaraj and Nanjaraj. The reigning monarch 'Chick Kissen' was only the nominal head of the administration, while Devaraj the Dalawa and Nanjaraj the Sarvadhikari were the *de facto* rulers.

In 1750 Hyder joined the army of Barakki Venkat Rao that fought side by side with the French. The treasuries seized by Hyder in the course of the campaign had enabled him to re-organise his army and equip the soldiers with better weapons of warfare. With the help of some French sepoys Hyder began to train up his new recruits in novel methods of warfare. He raised a body of 500 sepoys and 200 horses and further distinguished himself at Trichinopoly. "Trichinopoly was Hyder's great training ground. There amidst constant strife and turmoil, his fibre was hardened, his observation quickened; his resourcefulness increased and his character developed". It was at Trichinopoly that Hyder gained his experience in the art of western warfare which stood him in good stead throughout his career. Fighting by the side of the English, Hyder had many opportunities of securing firsthand knowledge of English strategem and skill in siege warfare. In 1755 Hyder was appointed Foujdar of Dindigul. Hyder's brilliant achievement in Dindigul was the subjugation of the rebellious Poligars led by Amminayaka and

Appinayaka. Hyder also accumulated much wealth and increased the strength of his army at Dindigul. He is said to have obtained skillful French engineers to organise a regular corps of artillery and to build up an arsenal and a laboratory.

By 1757 Nanjaraj had made himself the undisputed master of the Mysore kingdom. In 1751 Hyder came to Seringapatam at the request of Nanjaraja to suppress a mutiny there. The Government of Mysore at that time was in a bankrupt condition. The salaries of the soldiers had long been in arrears. The differences of opinion between Nanjaraj and his brother Devaraj only worsened the position. Hyder managed to bring about a reconciliation between Nanjaraj and his brother. He also persuaded Nanjaraj to pay off all the salaries that were in arrears to the soldiers. Hyder further distinguished himself by a brilliant victory over the Marathas who invaded Bangalore. The great reputation he had earned by his military exploits, his popularity with the Mysore soldiers and above all his position as the leader of a well organised and well equipped army had made him *de facto* ruler of the major part of the Mysore territories. From 1751 onwards Hyder ventured on an aggressive scheme of conquests and annexation. He annexed Sira and its dependencies and Hoskote and other forts which had been occupied by the Marathas. The Poligars of Raidurg and the chief of Harpanhalli surrendered without offering resistance. The Chittaldurg Poligar evaded Hyder's summons to surrender and therefore his country was forcibly annexed. His outstanding achievement during this period was the conquest of Bednur. The Rani of Bednur is said to have offered 18 lakhs of pagodas as ransom to Hyder. But Hyder marched against the city which he found almost undefended. The Rani had fled to Bellalraydurg and the soldiers could offer little resistance. Hyder seized Basavarajdurg, Honave, Mangalore and also Bellalraydurg. Hyder improved the fortifications of Bednur which was renamed Hydernagar. It is specially noteworthy that Hyder proclaimed himself as the real master of these dominions, while in the other parts of the kingdom, Hyder was carrying on the administration in the name of the Mysore king. It was at Bednur that Hyder for the first time asserted his right of striking coins in his own name: he considered Bednur as his 'Swarajya'.



Practically the whole of Canara was conquered by Hyder. He also made himself strong on the sea by building a fleet<sup>1</sup>, the expenses of which were met by the forcible loans he extracted from the conquered people. The Portuguese were anxious to win his friendship and assisted him by allowing their soldiers and officers to enter his service.

The Dutch at this time had factories at Basrur and Mangalore, but Hyder did not interfere with them. He tried to get the help of the Dutch for securing some equipments for his soldiers and applied to Wayerman, the Dutch Governor at Cochin, for one thousand muskets. The Governor wrote to the Supreme Government at Batavia recommending that it might be "worthwhile to have him complimented on behalf of the Company and to enter into negotiation with him". But the Supreme Government at Batavia "understanding at once that he was not a man with whom the Company could work, recommended that endeavours should be made to keep him in that disposition which he professed towards the Company and that his demands for war material should be refused in the most suitable manner". It was not in the Company's interest to set up any further establishment between Surat and Cochin. They knew that they could not depend on Hyder's friendship for long; therefore their main policy was to observe neutrality.

Hyder had aggressive designs on Malabar from the very beginning. The complicated political situation in Malabar offered him a very good opportunity.

"North Malabar was at that time in a state of anarchy, a sea of intrigues, conflicting interests and mutual jealousies," says N. K. Sinha<sup>2</sup>. "The Kolathiri's sway was now confined to the town of Chirakkal. The Mohomedan chief Ali Raja was master of Canannore. The Kadathanad chief ruled between the Mahe and the Kotta rivers. There was an offshoot of the Kilattanad family north of the Kavvyi river. The Kottayam

1 Peixoto says that Hyder's fleet consisted of 80 vessels, 13 topsail vessels, several manchooes of war, besides a great many skybars and small craft for the transport of war materials and provisions for the passage of the army across the rivers. According to the Dutch accounts the fleet had 2 ships, 7 smaller vessels and 40 gallivats, besides more than 50 other vessels laden with provisions.

2 *Hyder Ali*, by N. K. Sinha, P. 252, 253.

Taluka was partly in possession of Iruvalinad Nambiars and partly of the Puranad or Kottayam Rajas".

The first opportunity for Hyder to interfere in the affairs of Malabar was provided by the Raja of Palghat. The Zamorin of Calicut was expanding his territories at the expense of his weak neighbours. He attacked the dominions of the Palghat Raja in 1756 and carved out a country for him in the midst of Palghat territories, to which he gave the name Naduvattom. The Palghat Raja in great despair appealed to Hyder for help. Hyder promptly sent his brother-in-law Mukhadam, Sahib (Makhdum Ali Khan) with 2,000 horses, 5,000 infantry and 5 guns to assist the Raja. The Mysore troops aided by the Palghat Nairs drove the Zamorin's troops out of the Raja's dominions. The Zamorin's troops retreated and finding that they could not resist the Mysoreans, the Zamorin sued for peace. The Zamorin promised to restore his Palghat conquests to the Raja and to pay a war indemnity of 12 lakhs of Rupees to Mysore. The Zamorin then opened negotiations with Devaraj to whom he promised to remit the money in different instalments. Hyder relinquished his claim in favour of Devaraj who sent a Rajput corps under Hari Singh to collect the money. But before Hari Singh could collect any money from the Zamorin he heard about the death of Devraj and returned to Coimbatore. Hari Singh was murdered at Coimbatore by a band of Hyder's soldiers sent there under the leadership of Mukhadam Sahib. Thus Hyder established his claim on the 12 lakhs of Rupees which the Zamorin had promised to pay him. This was a convenient pretext for Hyder to invade the territories of the Zamorin.

In 1764, Breekeport was appointed Governor of Cochin. He received a letter from Hyder Ali in which he expressed his hopes that he and the Dutch would continue as friends. Hyder proposed that the Dutch should send a resident factor to Basrur to establish trade relations and promised all help to the Company in this respect. Breekeport sent a polite reply saying that the Dutch had no idea of extending their trade at that time, but that they would gladly avail themselves of his friendly offer as soon as they had resolved on doing so.

The Dutch authorities at Batavia had ordered the destruction of their fort at Cannanore. But as the fort was in a sound condition and as it was advantageously situated for their trade,



the work of demolition was not carried out. They had reduced their establishments at Canannore and some ammunitions and goods had been transferred to Cochin. The Dutch were prepared to sell the fort to Hyder Ali if he would offer a good sum for it. But it was to be on condition that a Dutch President should be allowed to live there to carry on trade. The Dutch Government at Batavia seems to have given similar instructions for destroying their fortresses at Chettwaye, Quilon and Cranganore. Breekport's predecessor, Wayerman, had refused to obey the order for destroying the Dutch fort at Chettwaye as he believed that it was "a most impolitic order". Breekport also realised the folly in destroying the forts; he therefore merely reduced the establishment there.

When Hyder had made himself master of Mangalore and other places, the Ali Raja<sup>1</sup>, the Mahomedan chief of Cannanore went over to his court promising him his loyal help for his Malabar expedition. The Mahomedans of North Malabar, commonly known as 'maplas' were having a virtual monopoly of the commerce and industries of the coast. These rich merchants used to lend money to the Malabar chieftains and princes at exorbitant rates of interest, sometimes upon pawns and sometimes in advance upon the harvests of pepper, cardamoms and rice. Ali Raja, the chief of the Moplas of Malabar, was making attempts to strengthen his position by acquiring political power. When he heard about Hyder's proposed scheme of a Malabar invasion, he led a 'deputation' to Hyder at Mangalore placing himself under the protection of Hyder. Hyder received the Mopla 'deputation' with great courtesy and loaded them with magnificent presents, assuring them of his protection and goodwill. Ali Raja had a powerful fleet at his command which he

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<sup>1</sup> There is a local tradition that Ali Raja had obtained possession of Canannore by virtue of his marriage with daughter of the Nair chief of Canannore. M.M.D.L.T., in his 'History of Hyder Shah alias Hyder Ali Khan and of his son Tipoo Sultan', gives the same story. "This Ali, son of one of the most rich and powerful Mapelehs had the good fortune in his youth to be beloved by the daughter of the Raja of Canannore, a Nair prince. The father in spite of the diversity of religion and the prejudice of his nation, which forbids all alliance with a different caste and much more with strangers of another religion, consented to the marriage of his daughter with Ali and dying, left him his principalities or the small kingdom of Canannore".

placed at the disposal of Hyder. Peixoto<sup>1</sup> says that the Ali Raja convinced Hyder that he could subjugate Malabar with ease if only he started the expedition and that Hyder was greatly encouraged by this welcome offer of help from one of the Malabar chieftains. According to M.M.D.L.T., (author of "History of Hyder Shah and Tipoo Sultan") Hyder appointed Ali Raja as his High Admiral and Ali Raja's brother Sheik Ali as the 'intendant' of the marine, of the ports and of the maritime commerce of his ports. Hyder also gave Ali Raja a considerable sum of money for purchasing or building new vessels.

Before undertaking his expedition to Malabar, Hyder had made extensive preparations to strengthen his army. He kept a corps of observation consisting of 3,000 cavalry, 4,000 infantry and 10,000 peons at Baswapatna in order to watch the Marathas. The army which Hyder took for his southern expedition consisted of 40,000 soldiers among whom were 450 Europeans.

In 1764 Hyder sent his emissary Ananta Rao with a letter to the English chief at Tellicherry to announce his intentions of conquering Malabar. He expected the English not to oppose him in his conquests of the Kolathri, the Zamorin Cochin and other Rajas of Malabar. The English at Tellicherry sent two representatives to Hyder Ali's camp "to point out to him what powers were in alliance with the Company and should not be molested". But in their treaty with Hyder they did not demand from him any promise for not molesting the powers which were in alliance with them. The English had undertaken to protect the Kolathiri from all his enemies by a previous treaty. But in the face of a formidable enemy like Hyder, the Kolathiri was forsaken by the English and left to protect himself. In February 1766 the Mysore troops took possession of the temple at Kunni-mangalam and laid siege to Matai. The Kolathiri's palace at

<sup>1</sup> Peixoto "The authenticity of the record is generally reliable since the events narrated find support from other sources for the history of Hyder and since also it is apparent that the author has written with a healthy frankness and in a language quite in accord with his European nativity. While chronicling the events he has in no way exaggerated and where he has given his opinion, he has been judicious. An account of Hyder from a pen of such an unbiased person as the author of this Mss. would set at naught the writings of English critics and Indian eulogists who have made much of their own and too little of their enemies' activities or achievements."



Chirakkal was seized by the Ali Raja and his troops. He fled to Tellicherry with the members of his family, but the English refused to give him refuge. The Kolathri escaped to Travancore and his kingdom was entrusted to the Ali Raja of Canannore.

Hyder after overthrowing the Kolathiri arrived near the Dutch fort at Canannore. He gave orders to put to death all Nairs and Hindus who wore 'kudumi', but he issued special instructions to spare the Company's servants. The Dutch commandant at Cannanore reported to Cochin that Hyder "had been so civil to their possessions and dependants that not a cocoanut had been picked from one of their trees, nor even a leaf abstracted". On March 15th, Hyder visited the Dutch commandant, H. Kroonenberg, at Cannanore and invited him most courteously to his camp at Chirakkal. The Dutch commandant was consigned to the care of Ali Raza Khan who told him that Hyder preferred the Dutch to all other European powers and would grant them special favours. Ali Raza Khan informed him of Hyder's great anxiety at the rapid expansion of the English in the different parts of India. The English were already masters of Bengal and the greater part of the Coromandel Coast, and they were trying to bring Malabar under their sway. If things were to develop at this rate, unless a change did take place within two years there was every possibility of the English becoming the masters of the whole of India. Hyder Ali was determined to check the progress of the English, but he wanted the able assistance of the Dutch and others in his attempt.

The object of this conversation was no doubt to compel the Dutch to seek his friendship. Hyder thought of securing the help of the Dutch by emphasising the danger of an English invasion. Hyder knew perfectly well that the assistance of the Dutch would be extremely valuable to him for his conquest of Malabar. What he expected from the Dutch was only neutrality when he conquered the Malabar states.

After conquering the kingdom of the Kolathri, Hyder marched against the Zamorin. He sent envoys to the Zamorin to demand the sum due to him by the treaty of 1756<sup>1</sup>. But the Zamorin was not in a position to pay the amount as his treasury had

<sup>1</sup> The Zamorin had promised to pay a war indemnity of 12 lakhs of Rupees to Hyder by the treaty of 1756.

been completely exhausted by his disastrous war with Travancore and Cochin. He asked for time, but Hyder was not prepared to grant any. In 1766 he invaded the Zamorin's territories with an army of 12,000 picked troops.

Hyder encamped on the side of the river which separated the Kolathiri's kingdom from the Zamorin's. The Zamorin and the Kolathiri princes pitched their camps on the other side of the river in order to prevent Hyder crossing it. But the Zamorin's attempts were in vain. Hyder crossed the river and marched straight through the Zamorin's troops slaughtering the Nairs in large numbers. Hyder's task was made easy by the help he received from the Muhammadans of Calicut. The Ali Raja appeared before the Zamorin's capital at the head of 1000 soldiers and summoned him to surrender, but the Zamorin refused. He tried to make peace with Hyder by a personal appeal. He offered all his treasuries and properties but Hyder demanded a crore of gold mohurs as the price of peace. Obviously the Zamorin could not satisfy this demand. Hyder arrived at Calicut and established his camp at Palayam on the 20th April. The Mysore troops laid siege to the Zamorin's palace where he was taken prisoner. The Zamorin sent the princesses and the Eralpad to Ponnani and put an end to his own life by setting fire to the powder magazine in the palace where he was imprisoned. The Eralpad who had retired to Ponnani with the princesses became the Zamorin. He ordered his Nairs to harass Hyder as best as they could and to carry on a guerrilla war against him. Several skirmishes took place, but Hyder destroyed all the Nair rebels in Calicut with his powerful army. Hyder pursued a policy of iron repression in Malabar. The Nairs were not allowed to bear arms; his soldiers were ordered to kill all the Nairs who violated his orders. Many were taken slaves and transported to Mysore. Meanwhile, Hyder's Mysore dominions were attacked by the Marathas and the Nizam and he was obliged to return to his capital immediately. Hyder restored the conquered dominions to the new Zamorin who agreed to pay him an annual tribute.

The Dutch were watching with anxious eyes the steady progress of Hyder. They were afraid that Hyder would extend his conquests to the south. Therefore, they resolved to compliment him on his conquests by special commissioners and to understand



the extent of his intentions. The Dutch sent their commissioners to Calicut where they were received politely by Hyder Ali. The chief object of this commission was to inform him of the rights and privileges they had enjoyed in the Zamorin's territories. They also informed him that the Rajas of Cochin and Travancore were their allies and therefore these kings should be left unmolested. Hyder's replies were made in the form of seven propositions as follows<sup>1</sup> :—

(1) He was prepared to make a perpetual alliance with the Company and to supply them with the products of his country, but he also should be accommodated whenever he stood in need of anything.

(2) If the Dutch required assistance he was willing to furnish them 30,000 land forces and his fleet, but he might expect the same from the Company.

(3) If he should advance further south, the Company should provide him with 1000 European soldiers, whose pay and expenses he would defray.

(4) If he passed through the territory of Chettwaye he would not molest the *Vassals* and subjects of the Company and would not disturb the possessions of the king of Cochin, out of respect for the Company.

(5) He was prepared to cede more territories to the Company.

(6) He would allow the Company the freedom to trade so far as his territory stretched to the north, or in course of time might stretch.

(7) The Dutch might restore their residency at Basrur and build a new residency at Ponnani or at Calicut.

Commenting on the fourth proposition Moens observes that it is striking that Hyder did not mention Travancore, but only Cochin. This goes to prove that Hyder had his eye on Travancore and its pepper. It is also significant to note that Hyder did not promise to refrain from marching through the Company's territories. His only promise was that he would do no harm to the inhabitants there. This was conclusive proof that his intentions were not to respect the Company's territories. What Hyder

<sup>1</sup> Memoirs of Moens.

wanted was, says Moens, a defensive and offensive alliance with the Company. Hyder also wrote to the Dutch Government at Batavia about his proposals. The Cochin authorities replied with the greatest politeness that they were unable to give an answer to his 'most important proposals' as they were beyond their jurisdiction, but they would address the Batavian Government about it and get their reply without delay. But Hyder could not be put off with their elusive reply. He modified his promises regarding the Raja of Cochin. He wanted it to be made conditional as he expected the Cochin Raja to contribute towards the expenses of his wars. He also offered to enter into a similar agreement with Travancore and the Company was to prevail upon these two Rajas to fulfil his demands. Hyder's demands were four lakhs of Rupees and eight elephants from the Cochin Raja and fifteen lakhs of rupees and and thirty elephants from Travancore Raja. He also added that if the Rajas were not inclined to pay, he would "pay a visit" to these countries!

The Dutch Governor informed both the princes about Hyder's proposals. The Travancore Raja replied that "he was unaware that Hyder went to war to please him or in accordance with his advice and was consequently unable to see the justice of his contributing towards his expenses". Further, he was a tributary to Muhammad Ali, Nawab of the Carnatic and therefore he could not afford to be a vassal to two powers at the same time. Still he was prepared to send envoys with a present to Hyder Ali, but Hyder Ali should re-instate the Kolathiri and the Zamorin in their dominions. He said that the dispossessed princes were prepared to pay large amounts to Hyder Ali, but he should then leave Malabar and return to the north. The Raja also added that the Dutch should send their envoys along with his to Hyder to represent these matters before him. The Cochin Raja replied that "he left his affairs in the hands of the Company and trusted that whatever conclusions were arrived at, the Kolathiri and the Zamorin should be restored to their dominions."

The Dutch Governor was afraid to send these replies to Hyder. They knew that nothing could come out of such negotiations except that they would get themselves into a difficult situation. Therefore they resolved not to send their envoys along with the envoys of the Rajas. They wanted to leave things as



they were and wait for instructions from Batavia. They informed Cochin and Travancore about their attitude and they also declined to send envoys to Hyder. The Cochin Governor then wrote to Hyder that he "had communicated his terms to Batavia, Travancore and Cochin and trusted all would be arranged in a satisfactory manner".

Meanwhile the Travancore Raja was taking defensive measures to meet Hyder's invasion which he knew was unavoidable. He informed the Nawab of Carnatic and the English Governor at Madras about the intentions of Hyder. DeLannoy and the Dalawa were ordered to fortify and strengthen the northern barriers. The Travancore lines were extended to the neighbourhood of the Cranganore fort. The Dutch fearing that the extension of these lines would offend Hyder Ali, sent notice to the Travancore Raja that he must stop his work. They also informed him that no armed Nairs belonging to his fort could be permitted within the territories of the Dutch. The Dutch were anxious not to offend Hyder Ali in any respect. They had already rebuked the Cranganore Raja for giving refuge to the Zamorin and his family. The Dutch Governor told the Cranganore Raja that "according to a lawful contract between him and the Hon'ble Company, all the land from Chettwaye to Cranganore was under the overseership of the Company and also that His Highness and his whole country were under the protection of the Company; that therefore his request to send away the Zamorin was not unreasonable, and that hereafter His Highness must abide implicitly by the good advice given him by the Company<sup>1</sup>". The Raja of Cranganore immediately obeyed and desired that the Zamorin should leave his country. These acts of the Dutch authorities show how much they stood in mortal fear of Hyder. They were afraid to inform Hyder of the unpleasant replies the Rajas of Travancore and Cochin had given them. They were not prepared to allow the Travancore Raja to extend his fortifications to Cranganore. Now they were not prepared even to allow the exiled Zamorin to live in the territories of one of their dependants. This policy they called 'strict neutrality'. But it was a neutrality which was imposed upon them by their helplessness.

1 Official report to the Governor of Cochin, quoted by Day.

In October 1766 there was a strong rumour that Hyder was going to attack Travancore and Cochin; but Hyder heard news of an attack of his country by the Marathas and the Nizam and therefore he hastened to Mysore. Hyder managed to avert a crisis by winning over the Nizam to his side. In February 1767 Hyder's fleet, consisting of 28 vessels appeared in Cochin. Two envoys from the fleet came on shore and informed the Dutch authorities that their fleet had come in search of the Marathas and to protect the Malabar coast. But they left for the north the next day itself.

Hyder was now engaged in a serious war with the English in the north (First Mysore War, 1768—1769). Hyder and the Nizam were defeated by the English at the battles of Changama and Tiruvannamalai. These reverses compelled the Nizam to abandon his alliance with Hyder and join sides with the English. The English captured Mangalore and other places on the west coast. But Hyder soon re-established his position there. He now took the offensive and invaded the Carnatic and marched against Madras. A peace was concluded at Madras between Hyder and the English in 1769. One of the clauses of this treaty was that Travancore should not be attacked by Hyder as it was under the protection of the Nawab of Carnatic. The Travancore Raja was no doubt greatly relieved to hear this good news from the English at Madras. But he knew that Hyder's promises would be easily broken, and therefore did not desist from his preparations for defence. The Travancore Raja deputed an officer to the Mysore court to watch the further movements of Hyder Ali.<sup>1</sup>

The Travancore Raja had sent his Dalawa to Cochin to have an interview with the Commander as soon as he heard about Hyder's plans to invade Travancore. The Raja wanted to ascertain how far the Dutch would help him in his attempts to check the progress of Hyder. The following terms were agreed upon as a result of the interview<sup>2</sup> :—

1 *History of Travancore* by Sankunni Menon

2 A free translation from the Malayalam document.



*Facts represented by the  
Dalawa before the Commander.*

1. Some evil minded parties may try to bring about a rupture in the friendly relations between the Company and Travancore by telling all sorts of falsehoods to the Commander. The Maharaja requests that the Commander should not believe any of these.

2. It is rumoured that Hyder Ali proposes to lead his invasions on four sides through Manappuram, through Trichur, through the hill sides in the south and through the sea. The Maharaja wishes to strengthen his position after consulting the Commander.

3. The Maharaja requests the Commander to send some rifles, guns and ammunition.

4. The Maharaja would like to receive some money for his pepper.

*The Commander's reply  
to the Dalawa.*

1. The Commander will not take into account any of these falsehoods spread by interested parties. The Company will always be friendly towards the Rajas of Malabar as they are to the Company.

2. The Commander has also heard about Hyder's intentions to proceed to the south. But he does not know anything as to the truth of it. He will try to prevent Hyder's invasion by way of Manappuram and the sea. He was at that time expecting orders from the authorities from Batavia. Meanwhile, he will try to effect an understanding between Hyder and the Malabar princes.

3. The Commander will send a few which he has received from Batavia.

4. Rs. 25,000 will be given if the agreed quota of pepper is submitted.

By this interview between the Dalawa and the Commander nothing definite was settled. But there was a mutual understanding that they will not betray each other in case of a Mysorean invasion. When Hyder's fleet sailed off to the north after visiting Cochin, the Dutch Commander informed the Rajas of Cochin and Travancore that he had persuaded them to leave the fort. The Rajas of Cochin and Travancore sent their ministers to the Dutch Commander to discuss about their future

plan of action. The following is the text of the discussions that took place in the conference between the Commander and the two ministers<sup>1</sup>:—

"The Dalawa said that the Maharaja was very pleased with the Commander for persuading Hyder's fleet to leave Cochin. The Commander replied that the Company would do nothing on its part which might hinder its good relations with Travancore. But Travancore has not paid to the Company the 3,000 candies of pepper which had been promised in the treaty. The Company has received only 2,300 candies from Travancore. The Dalawa replied that it was because of the unexpected failure of crops. The Maharaja was too willing to give all the pepper in his territory to the Company. He wanted to enter into a new agreement with the Company concerning pepper transactions. The Commander replied that he could not do this without the permission of the authorities at Batavia. He would be pleased to see the terms of the existing treaty being fulfilled. Then the Dalawa told the Commander about Hyder's activities. The Nawab's troops had settled in Malabar for a long time. They have dishonoured the Brahmin priests and the Malabar princes who have now sought refuge in the Maharaja's territories. Their maintenance has cost the Maharaja very heavy expenditure. The Malabar chieftains were of opinion that it was the best opportunity for re-instating the Kolathri and the Zamorin in their lost dominions. The Dalawa wanted to know what attitude the Company would take in such a move as this. The Commander replied that he was not permitted to get involved in the wars of the Malabar princes. His instructions were to settle the affairs relating to Travancore and Cochin only. Therefore it was not possible for him to interfere in the affairs of the northern States. The prospects of a war are always uncertain. Any way Travancore is bearing heavy expenses for these northern princes for which act of kindness, they are always indebted to Travancore. Then the Dalawa asked the Commander what attitude the Company would take if Travancore and Cochin were to be attacked by Hyder. The Commander said that the Company would see that the Nawab takes no such aggressive steps. The

<sup>1</sup> A Translation from the Malayalam document. This document is published in Malayalam in K. P. P. Menon's "Cochy Raja Charitram" Vol. II, pp. 365—370.



Commander believes that the Nawab would pay heed to the orders of the Company as has already been proved by the withdrawal of the fleet from Cochin. The Dalawa asked him what he would do if the Nawab refused to comply with his request. The Commander replied that he was sure that the Nawab would not attack any one unless he was attacked first. If the Nawab proves to be imprudent he will, of course, suffer the consequences. The Dalawa sought the advice of the Commander about the question of re-instating the Kolathiri in his dominions. The Commander replied that the Maharaja should decide such questions using his own discretion. But he was afraid that it may precipitate a conflict with the Nawab. The Dalawa asked the Commander whether it would not be possible for him to persuade the Nawab to restore the conquered dominions to the Kolathiri and the Zamorin. But the Commander replied that nothing could be done at present as the Nawab was away in the north. Any way, he promised to correspond with the Nawab on this question, but he was afraid it might take some time. The Commander would inform the Maharaja about the results of his attempts some time later. The Dalawa then asked whether the Company would extend its support to the Maharaja if he were to start the war on behalf of the Kolathiri and the Zamorin. The Commander advised that the Maharaja should not take such a step. If he does so, he will have to suffer its consequences by himself. The Company would never come to the help of the Maharaja on this account. ...."

This document shows the real attitude of the Dutch with regard to the Mysorean invasion. The maximum help that the Dutch could promise was to try peaceful methods of persuading Hyder Ali to drop the idea of extending his invasions to the South.

The relations between the Dutch and the Raja of Cochin were not very friendly during the period. There was a dispute between the Company and the Raja over the ownership of a strip of territory known as 'Pathinettarayalam'. The trouble over this territory had started as early as 1719 when it was appropriated by the Dutch. The Dutch were in possession of this territory till 1740 during which period the Raja had been persistently complaining to the Batavian Government about the great injustice done to him. In 1740 when Van Gollennesse was

the Governor of Cochin, this territory was ceded back to the Raja. But in 1757 it was captured by the Zamorin who later transferred it to the Dutch Company. After the Zamorin had been driven out of the Cochin territory, the Raja pressed his claim over Pathinettarayalam and demanded that it should be restored to him. When the Cochin authorities wrote to Batavia about the claims of the Raja, they instructed the Governor to try his best to persuade the Raja to give up his claims. In their secret despatch dated 17th September 1763, the Governor was asked to refute the claim of the Raja. If the Raja was found to be persistent in his claims the Dutch Governor was to offer some other territory as a compensation. But the Raja seemed to be adamant in his claims and he could not be persuaded to give them up. Finally in February 1769 the Dutch ceded the territory to the Raja.

The Tripoonithurai Granthavari relates an instance when a war was averted between the Dutch and Travancore by the mediation of Cochin. In 1770 (Vrischigom 7, 945 M. E.) some Dutch soldiers attacked the Travancore Fort at Kuriapilly without any provocation from Travancore and the latter made preparations for a war. But the Cochin Raja interfered in the affair and brought about a reconciliation between the two by arranging a conference of representatives from both sides.

The unfriendly relations between the Raja and the Dutch became worse over a dispute on their respective jurisdictions in Cochin. In 1770 the Dutch claimed jurisdiction over Amaravathy, Mattancherry and Chellaye. All the Konkarnies in Cochin were claimed to be under the special protection of the Company. The Dutch Governor proclaimed that the Raja had no right to collect taxes from the aforesaid territories and therefore the inhabitants should not make any remittances to the Raja's officers<sup>1</sup>.

The Cochin Raja complained before the Raja of Travancore about the hostile attitude of the Dutch. The Travancore Raja wrote to the Dutch Governor that he should not do any injustice to Cochin. He also offered to be the mediator between Cochin and the Dutch to bring about a reconciliation. The Travancore Raja sent one thousand five hundred soldiers for the protection of the Cochin Raja. The Raja of Cochin built a new fort at Anchikaimal to which place he later retired.

1. Press List of Ancient Dutch Records. No. 882.



The Dutch created further troubles for Cochin when they posted Kalika Prabhu, a bitter enemy of the Cochin Raja as their trade agent in two important settlements in the Cochin territory. The Cochin chiefs could not suffer these outrages. Paliath Achen attacked the settlements of the Prabhu, killed him and captured his followers as prisoners. The Dutch Governor was thoroughly infuriated at this action and demanded an explanation from the Raja. The Governor demanded that the Raja should apologise for his past conduct and give an undertaking to be loyal to the Company in future. He was to destroy the newly constructed fort at Anchikaimal and to send back the soldiers that he had taken from Travancore. All prisoners taken by Paliath Achen were to be immediately restored; and the Raja was to bear all the expences. The Raja was prepared to abide by all these injunctions, and he promised to settle the matter with the Governor. But the Governor was determined to wreak vengeance on the Paliath chief. Paliath Achen was proclaimed to be a rebel and his properties were seized by the Company.

The Raja tried his best to pacify the Dutch authorities in Cochin. He was fully prepared to comply with all their demands. But the Governor took up a very hostile attitude towards the Raja. The Raja wrote to the Governor General at Batavia relating all his grievances. (Letter dated Thulam 946 M.E.) The Travancore Raja also wrote to Batavia complaining about the outrages of the Dutch authorities in Cochin. He informed them about the Dutch raid of his fortress at Kuriapilly and also championed the rights of the Cochin Raja in Mattancherry, Chellaye and other places. He pointed out that all these would affect the pepper trade between the Rajas and the Company and would be ruinous to the interests of both. He requested the Governor General to send two representatives to Malabar to settle these disputes. The Batavian Government recalled the Governor of Cochin and appointed Adrian Moens in his place. Before Moens took charge as Governor he received two letters from the Cochin and the Travancore Rajas explaining the causes of the trouble once again. The Cochin Raja informed him of the troubles he had taken in bringing about a reconciliation between Travancore and the Dutch in connection with the Kuriapilly raid. He complained that in spite of all his efforts to maintain friendly relations with the Company, the Dutch authorities in Cochin had

been giving him ceaseless trouble by seizing his territories and appropriating all the customs and duties due to him. He earnestly hoped that the new Governor would see the justice of his cause and redress all his grievances. The Travancore Raja also complained about the hostile activities of the Dutch towards his State and Cochin. He too expressed his hope that the new Governor would restore the friendly relations between the Company and the two Swaroopams.

The Governor General of Batavia in his reply to the Travancore Raja (dated 1st October 1771) expressed his great desire to maintain amicable relations with Travancore. He said that he had instructed the new Governor of Cochin to settle all matters of dispute. But he could not entirely approve of the claims of the Cochin Raja as they were against the previous agreements entered into with Cochin. In his reply dated 1st October 1771 to the Cochin Raja, the Governor General reminded him of the previous agreements by which the Raja had relinquished his claims over the Konkarnies and other foreign merchants in his territories. Still he expressed his hope that everything would be settled in a friendly way with the arrival of the new Governor whom he was sending to Cochin.

Moens, the new Governor as soon as he arrived in Cochin, enquired into the points of dispute between the Company and the Raja. He was of opinion that the Raja's claims over Mattancherry, Chellayee and other places could not be justified on the ground of previous agreements. He also insisted that the Raja could exercise no jurisdiction over the Konkarnies and other merchants as his claims were definitely against all the former undertakings he had entered into with the Dutch. Moens pointed out<sup>1</sup> that the Raja was then in possession of more territories than those stipulated in the treaty of 1663 which his great ancestor had signed with the Dutch immediately after the expulsion of the Portuguese from Cochin. According to clause (13) of that treaty, the Raja had promised not to appropriate any of the waste lands surrounding the Cochin fort without the permission of the Company. But now all these waste lands had been seized by the Raja and his territories had extended as near as a stone-throw from the fort. The Company should at least have a gun range of

<sup>1</sup> Letter dated 10th February 1771.



waste lands round about the fort. The Governor asked the Raja on what authority he had planted cocoanut trees in these waste lands. "Could the Raja produce any documents authorising him to do so? Everything would go to prove that the Raja's actions were illegal." Moens, refuting the Raja's claims on Mattancherry, said that the whole trouble arose out of the Raja's excessive demands of customs and duties from the merchants at Mattancherry. He asserted that the Company's territories extended as far as Chellaye and that he won't yield even a single plot of land to the Raja. All those who were resident in these territories must necessarily be under the protection of the Company. The Konkarnies had been imported into Cochin by the Portuguese from Goa and they had always remained under the protection of the Portuguese. By the treaty of 1663 it had been specially laid down that the Toapasses and Konkarnies should be under the jurisdiction of the Dutch. The Dutch had always asserted this right and the Konkarnies themselves were not prepared to accept the domination of any power except that of the Company. Therefore, the Raja's claims were thoroughly unjustifiable.

After a series of correspondence like this between the Raja and the Company a final settlement was arrived at in 1772. The Dutch Governor made the following declaration on behalf of the Company:—"From this day forward, as long as the Government of Cochin exists, I do cede and transfer unto you and your descendants the right of collecting the income from Mattancherry and Chellaye, to collect the farms and customs of Amaravathi and to conduct the affairs of Mattancherry, Chellaye and of the Konkarnies and their temple" . . . . . "But the Raja shall impose no new demands upon the Konkarnies; they shall have full liberty to complain to the Dutch Governor if aggrieved; the Raja shall not interfere in any matters of the temple without the knowledge and consent of the Company". The Dutch no doubt ceded these rights very grudgingly. As Day observes:—"Giving up these rights must have been a great trial to the Dutch as they had guarded them most jealously ever since 1663".

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE MYSOREAN INVASION—(Continued)

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AFTER the first Mysore War, Hyder was engaged in a war with the Marathas. The Zamorin thinking that Hyder would not get clear off his enemies had not cared to pay the annual tribute which he had promised in the treaty of 1668. But Hyder made peace with his enemies in Mysore and turned his attention towards the south again. He sent his general Sreehivasa Rao to Palghat in order to march into the Zamorin's territories. The Zamorin appealed to the French at Mahe to help him and he concluded a treaty with Governor Duprat on the 12th January 1774, 'submitting himself, his country and subjects to the King of France'. The French undertook to protect him from his enemies and Duprat took possession of the Zamorin's territories and hoisted the French flag in the Calicut Fort. Duprat informed Hyder Ali's general that the Zamorin had been taken under the protection of the King of France and therefore he should not be attacked. But Hyder's troops could not be persuaded to desist from their object and they marched against Calicut. When they entered Calicut, Duprat left the fort and hurriedly returned to Mahe. Deserted by the French, the Zamorin also left Calicut. He attempted to take refuge with the Cranganore Raja, but the Dutch were afraid to give him protection. Therefore he retired with his family to Travancore in a native boat by sea.

Hyder demanded from the Cochin Raja two lakhs of rupees and a few elephants. The Raja of Cochin consulted the Travancore Raja who advised him it was better to satisfy Hyder's demands. The Travancore Raja himself lent the money to Cochin so that Hyder might be persuaded to drop his ideas of a southern conquest. The Tiruppunithurai Granthavari says that when Hyder pressed his demands on Cochin the Raja requested the Company to send its captains to Hyder to tell him that he should be lenient to Cochin. But the Dutch were not prepared to undertake any such responsibilities on behalf of Cochin and therefore the Raja had no other alternative but to satisfy Hyder's demands.



Hyder now demanded two lakhs of rupees and two elephants from the Cranganore Raja. The Dutch Governor tried his best to save the Cranganore Raja as the latter was under the Company's protection. But the Nawab's general sent his troops to Cranganore to compel the Raja to make the payment. The Raja agreed to pay 50,000 rupees to Hyder in two instalments.

The Dutch were trying their best not to displease Hyder Ali. But the latter was making use of these opportunities to press his demands further and further. In order to pick up a quarrel with the Company, Hyder complained that the Dutch had allowed the Zamorin to traverse their territories and that the Zamorin had concealed his treasures with the inhabitants in different places in the Dutch possessions. The Dutch Governor asked him to point them out to him and assured him that he would make a search in these places in the presence of the Nawab's representative. The Governor used all his wits to maintain friendly relations with Hyder, but the latter was very cold in his attitude towards the Dutch. The Governor thought that Hyder's unfriendly attitude was due to the fact that he had not received any presents in return for those he had sent to Batavia in 1766. The Governor feared that Hyder might have taken it as an insult and wanted to rectify the mistake. The return presents had actually arrived from Batavia, but they could not be sent to Hyder as he was at that time engaged in war with the Marathas. On the 23rd February 1775 the Governor sent two envoys with presents to Hyder who received them with great courtesy. The envoys returned with letters and presents from Hyder which were sent to Batavia by the ship 'Princess of Orange.' Meanwhile the Governor was trying to keep Hyder Ali in good humour and induce him to make a treaty of friendship with the Company. The 'Princess of Orange' had an unusually long voyage because of adverse monsoons, therefore there was considerable delay in getting the reply from Batavia to Hyder's letters. The Dutch Governor explained the cause for the delay to Hyder; but Hyder was not in a friendly mood to receive these explanations. Hyder seemed to have been under the impression that Moens, the Dutch Governor, had actually received instructions from Batavia to make an offensive and defensive alliance with Hyder, but that he was deliberately keeping them away from Hyder as he did not like these proposals.

Hyder now demanded from the kings of Cochin and Cranganore a new instalment of subsidies. But the Dutch Governor succeeded in persuading Hyder to refrain from further requisitions of money. Hyder yielded to this as he was engaged in a war with the Marathas at that time. But soon he revived his demands on Cochin and Cranganore. Cochin was asked to pay 8 lakhs of rupees and Cranganore one lakh. In order to enforce his demands he sent his general Sardar Khan to seize some of the territories of the Cochin Raja. The Raja sent his envoys to Hyder at Seringapatam. They tried their best to escape from the obligation of the payment of this amount. But Hyder was very stubborn in his demands. Finally a compromise was arrived at by which Cochin promised to give four lakhs of rupees and four elephants immediately and in future an annual tribute of one lakh and twenty thousand rupees. The Cranganore Raja had to pay one lakh and twenty thousand Rupees immediately and in future an annual tribute of twenty thousand rupees. The Dutch would have very much liked to save Cranganore from this obligation. Cranganore had been a vassal of the Dutch ever since 1717 and the Dutch knew that its acknowledgment of Hyder's suzerainty would involve the loss of their own. But, as Moens frankly admits, he could not prevent this and therefore he had 'to shut his eyes to it'.

In October 1775, the Dutch tried to placate Hyder by supplying him with elephants and fire arms. The Dutch factor at Calicut wrote a coaxing letter to Hyder in which he apologised for the fire-arms being of an inferior quality. He promised to send better weapons as soon as he could get them from Europe. The elephants, he said, were the best procurable, and "hoped that they would answer the purpose for which they were intended". He complained about the extortions of Hyder's agents at Calicut. But, he tried to please Hyder by writing to him that he had sent carpenters and iron smiths to assist in the construction of the Mysore fleet. He wished Hyder health, long life and success in his undertakings.

In 1766 Hyder demanded a safe passage through the territories of the Dutch Company for attacking Travancore. Moens evaded a reply as he had no definite instructions from Batavia. But Hyder was highly incensed by the conduct of the Dutch and



threatened a forcible march through the Dutch territories. Sirdar Khan was ordered to proceed against Travancore with 10,000 soldiers.

Hyder now demanded from the Dutch a full account concerning the administration of Chettwaye. He pressed his claims on Chettwaye as it formed a part of the Zamorin's dominions, whose suzerainty he had assumed. The Dutch sent a regular account to the Nawab, but he was bent upon taking possession of these territories. On October 9, Sirdar Khan crossed the Chettwaye river near Pulicarra and seized the customs house arresting a writer of the Company. The general demanded twenty years' revenues from the Dutch officials at Chettwaye. The Dutch protested in vain against the activities of Hyder's general. The Mysore forces were divided into two bodies, one of which proceeded south towards Paponetty while the other took possession of Chettwaye. Paponetty was burnt, pillaged and plundered; and the Dutch retreated to Cranganore. Sirdar Khan took up his quarters in the residency at Paponetty from where he sent a letter to the Dutch Governor explaining the causes that had led to the hostilities. He stated that his master had been insulted by Moens' silence in replying to his letters and that he had received orders to invade the Company's territories. At the same time his master desired to live in friendship with the Company. Any way he insisted on getting a free passage through the Company's territories towards Travancore. The prospects of friendship, he said, would depend on the Company's attitude with regard to this demand. Moens replied that he was glad to understand that Hyder wished his friendship; but he could not but observe that Hyder's conduct had been very strange. He trusted that Hyder would put a stop to all hostilities and respect the Company's territories. He also offered his mediation between Hyder and Travancore. But before this letter reached Hyder, Sirdar Khan led his troops against Cranganore in order to take it by surprise. But his attempts proved a failure. Sirdar Khan now wrote another letter to Moens stating that he had taken possession of Chettwaye and demanding twenty years' revenue from the lands which he had seized: "he actually demanded a tribute from the Company".

The Dutch Governor found himself in a very difficult position. He did not have sufficient troops to resist the invasion of

Hyder. Therefore, he thought it wise to get the assistance of Cochin and Travancore and proposed to these Rājas a plan of joint action against Hyder. The Travancore Raja replied that he had entered into an alliance with the Nawab of Arcot and the English East India Company by which he was to act only on the defensive. He had been promised help by his allies only if the Mysore troops took the initiative of attacking his territories. His allies had definitely stated that they would send no help if he were to be the aggressor. Therefore he regretted his inability to join sides with the Dutch.

However, busy preparations were made by the Dutch and Travancore to meet the invasion. The Dutch received re-inforcements from Ceylon and fortified Ayacottah near the northern boundary of the island of Vypeen. It was rumoured that Hyder would first launch his attack on Ayacottah. The Travancore Raja sent some soldiers to Ayacottah, but they were strictly following a defensive policy. Hyder attacked the Chettwaye fort, and the Dutch resident informed Moens that he could not hold the fort without immediate help from outside. Moens decided to send an expedition by sea for the relief of Chettwaye. But Hyder's troops prevented the Dutch from landing. The Dutch were compelled to surrender the fort on the 13th November and the garrison withdrew to Cranganore. Hyder had promised to allow the Dutch to withdraw safely to Cranganore, but contrary to his pledge Hyder's general took the whole garrison as prisoners.

The fall of Chettwaye was a great blow to the Dutch. The Zamorin decided to keep his forces at Cranganore and to launch a joint action with the help of Travancore and Cochin for recovering Chettwaye. Moens wrote to the ministers of Travancore and Cochin about his plans and asked them whether they were prepared to join in the operations. The ministers replied that they had no orders to take any offensive. They added that any such step should be taken after mature consideration as their failure would mean the subjugation of the whole of Malabar by Hyder. Moens believed that their offers and boasted readiness were nothing but big talk and decided to march against Hyder without waiting for their help. At that time the Travancore Raja informed Moens that he intended to pay a visit to discuss with him the steps to be taken and therefore he should delay his



attack for some more time. But later, the Raja informed Moens that he could not pay the promised visit as he was engaged in some domestic affairs. However, it was the Raja's wish that the Dutch should not launch an offensive as he feared that the defeat of the Dutch would soon lead to his own.

Meanwhile the reply to Hyder's letters arrived from Batavia (January 9, 1777). It was forwarded to Hyder with some customary presents and also an apologetic letter from Moens. On the 25th February Hyder's commandant and resident of the Chettwaye fort came to Moens. They told Moens that some of the Dutch soldiers who were taken prisoners had joined the services of Hyder and others had been set at liberty. They informed him that Hyder was still anxious to enter into a treaty of friendship with the Company. Hyder's letter to Moens disowned Sirdar Khan's proceedings and stated that his instructions were only to enquire into the administration of some of the Zamorin's territories in Chettwaye. He said he had no "unfriendly feelings towards the Dutch and trusted all matters of dispute would be rapidly and amicably settled."

Moens clearly understood that his troubles with Hyder would finally lead to the strengthening of the English Company's power in India. The English were no doubt interested in preventing Hyder Ali becoming too powerful. But they were "laughing in their sleeves" when they found the disorders in Malabar and "trying to fish in troubled waters." They were prepared to allow Hyder to capture Cochin and other forts from the Dutch as they were sure they could capture them from Hyder's hands before long.<sup>1</sup> Moens anticipated all these events. Left to himself, Moens would have joined with Hyder Ali in his attempt to subjugate Travancore. Day observes: "Had this ambitious capable Dutch Governor of Cochin been at this period possessed of sufficient troops at his own disposal, untrammelled by Batavian orders, there can be little doubt, he would have joined the Mysoreans. Had he done so, Travancore must have fallen and the Cochin State would have become a desert. Then who could have foretold what course events on the western coast would have taken?"

<sup>1</sup> Starovinus "Voyages to East Indies. P. 235-56.

Moens got a convenient opportunity for launching his attack on Chettwaye. The Zamorin's Nairs in Calicut were carrying on a desultory warfare against Hyder's troops. The Nairs were joined by Hydros Kutty, a Mohomedan chieftain of Chavakkad, who had been appointed by Hyder as his Governor there. Hyder had demanded from him an exorbitant sum as annual tribute; and unable to satisfy the excessive demands of Hyder, he joined sides with the rebellious Nairs. Hyder's troops were engaged in putting down the rebellion in Calicut and everything appeared favourable to the Dutch to attempt a recovery of the Chettwaye fort.

The expedition was launched on the 8th of January 1778. The Dutch stormed the Cranganore Raja's palace which had a garrison of 400 men. They pursued the enemy to Paponetty and from there to Valappattam. They reached Chettwaye on the 11th evening. The fort was heavily bombarded, but the Nawab's forces held out valiantly. The siege lasted for seven days, but finding their attempts useless, the Dutch retreated to Cranganore. But Hyder attacked the palace of the Cranganore Raja which the Dutch had seized and compelled them to retire to the Cranganore fort.

The minister of the Travancore Raja paid a visit to Moens who urged upon him the necessity of defending Cranganore. Moens "pointed out to him that on the preservation of Cranganore and Ayacottah depended his master's safety or ruin; that his master should meet part of the expenditure for otherwise they could not maintain a large force; that without this his master would be exposed to the greatest danger of losing everything". But Moens says that his arguments were addressed to deaf ears.

Hyder's attentions were now turned to Mysore where he had to wage a war with the English and the Nawab of Arcot. The Travancore Raja had informed the English and the Arcot Nawab about the aggressive policy of Hyder in Malabar. Moens made another attempt to win the friendship of Hyder. He was prepared to sign an offensive and defensive alliance with Hyder; but the latter refused to listen to any of Moens' overtures. On his way north, Hyder plundered the Dutch store-house at Porto Novo and made the Dutch Resident there a prisoner.



In 1781 Van Angelbeck became the Governor of Cochin. The Cochin Raja had allowed the Travancore Raja to strengthen the fortress at Pallipport as a measure of common defence. Van Angelbeck could not approve of the extension of Travancore influence in Cochin territories and wrote bitterly about this to the Cochin Raja.<sup>1</sup> He asked the Raja to put a stop to all measures of fortifications which he feared would lead to disastrous consequences. But the Cochin Raja was not prepared to abide by the instructions of the Dutch.

In the Second Mysore War between Hyder and the English the Travancore Raja assisted the latter by sending a large army. Hyder Ali died in the course of the war (December 1732) and he was succeeded by his son Tippu. Tippu a worthy son of his warlike father, continued the war. The English sent a strong army under Colonel Fullerton to Malabar. He was to be assisted by the Malabar Nairs and the troops of the Travancore Raja. The commandant of the English army at Calicut, Major Abington, informed the Travancore Raja that "the only safe way was to exert every means to shut the door against the enemy and it could not be effected while the passes of Canom were left open and Palghatcherry remained in their possession." The Raja accordingly sent a strong force to fight side by side with the English who managed to seize the fortress at Palghat. At this time the Zamorin of Calicut, who was spending his time as an exile, placed himself under the protection of the English and invoked their help for recovering his lost possessions. The Zamorin was placed in charge of Palghat, but he was so dreadfully afraid of Tippu's soldiers, that as soon as he heard about their advance, left the fort and escaped. The British seized Tippu's fortress at Cannanore engaging the Mysore soldiers in many pitched battles. The war came to a close by the treaty of Mangalore<sup>2</sup> which recognised Tippu's suzerainty over the territories of Northern Malabar. The Raja of Travancore was specially mentioned as an ally of the English and guaranteed protection.

1 Letters dated Nov. 10, 1782 and Nov. 14, 1782.

2 Treaty of Mangalore. March 14, 1784.

Tippu's administration of the Malabar provinces was severe in its extremity.<sup>1</sup> The ancient system of Government was completely set aside and was substituted by unrestrained autocracy. Tippu's fanatic attempts to convert the people of Malabar to Islam made matters worse. Tippu wanted to "improve the morals" of the Malayalees who he believed, "were more shameless in their immorality than the beasts of the field". Tippu wanted "to honour them with Islam" and started a regular policy of forcible conversion. His religious persecutions led to a large-scale rebellion in Malabar. The movement was led by Ravi Varman of the Zamorin's house. Supported by the rebellious Nairs, Ravi Varman made himself master of some territories and attempted to seize Calicut. Tippu immediately sent Lally and Mir Asir Ali Khan to suppress the revolt. The Zamorin was driven out of Calicut. Large numbers of Hindus left Malabar and sought refuge in Travancore. The Travancore Raja afforded them protection and all the expenditure for their maintenance was borne by the State. The Zamorin also fled to Travancore and sought refuge there.

In April and May of 1788 there was a strong rumour that Tippu was marching against Cranganore with a huge army. But the Dutch seemed to have entered into an understanding with Tippu in that year<sup>2</sup>.

1 Day describes the atrocities of Tippu thus: "Many of his victims were hung, even mothers with their children around their necks, others were dragged to death by elephants. No mode of execution was too terrible, no torture too great, to satiate his fiendish vengeance. Churches were plundered, and the roofs of all place of worship blown off whilst Hindu and Christian women were compelled to accept Mohomedan husbands. No Hindu was allowed to wear the lock of hair on his head. The rack and starvation were used as instruments of conversion and those obstinate unbelievers who refused to be convinced by these persuasive arguments were put to death" This description of Tippu's activities is no doubt exaggerated. But the consternation he created in Malabar was by no means small. Tippu's name could strike terror in every part of the country. Even to day he is remembered as "Mysore Kaduva".

2 Day says:—"Some correspondence occurred between Tippu Sultan and the Dutch with reference to Hydr's old wish of entering into an offensive and defensive alliance with them. But many of the letters appear to be missing. There is one dated September 1788 in which it is stated that Tippu's envoys will shortly be at Cranganore to assist the Dutch against Travancore and the writer who is at Calicut ends by saying time will show if he (Tippu) really wishes to assist us or is merely serving his own interests."



In 1789 Tippu was planning for buying the Cochin fort from the Dutch. The Dutch had expressed a wish to sell their fortresses in Cochin, Cranganore and Ayacottah. Tippu had deputed the Cochin Raja to negotiate on his behalf, but before anything could be finally settled the war with Travancore was precipitated.

The conquest of Travancore was a long cherished ambition of the Mysoreans. Tippu was only waiting for an excuse to lead his armies against Travancore. When the Travancore Raja gave asylum to the Brahman refugees of Malabar—about 30,000 families—Tippu was highly incensed and demanded their surrender. But the Travancore Raja politely replied that that would be against the traditional principles of hospitality which his family had observed and as such he could not oblige him. Tippu decided to take his vengeance on Travancore even though he had promised to recognise the independence of Travancore in the treaty of Mangalore. Tippu encouraged the Zamorin to put forward his claims on Travancore and promised him all support. But the Zamorin did not join in this scheme. Tippu then induced the Raja of Cochin to put forward his claims on Parur and Alangad which were the part of the Travancore State. Tippu advised the Cochin Raja to meet the Travancore Raja to see whether peace could be concluded between Travancore and Tippu. The two Rajas met at Anna-nada, north-east of Cranganore. The Travancore Raja said he could not do anything without consulting the English and the Nawab of Arcot.

Tippu sent his envoys to Travancore with valuable presents to the king. The Raja received Tippu's envoys in the presence of Major Bannerman, the representative of the English Government at Trivandrum. Tippu wrote to the Raja in a coaxing way how an alliance with Mysore would be to the great advantage of Travancore. The Raja politely replied that he could not enter into any alliance without the permission of the English Company. Tippu was highly offended at this reply and made busy preparations for his invasion. The English Governor wrote to Tippu that an invasion of Travancore would be considered as a declaration of war against the English. He promised to send two or three battalions of the Company's troops to the help of Travancore. At the same time he informed the Raja that he should always be on the defensive and never appear as the aggressor.

In 1789 Tippu marched from Coimbatore with 20,000 infantry, 10,000 spearmen, 5,000 cavalry and 20 field guns. Tippu had already expressed his desire to buy the fortress of Cranganore and Ayacottah which the Dutch were prepared to sell. He opened negotiations with the Dutch at Palghat about the purchase of these forts. The Travancore Raja knew that the fall of Cranganore and Ayacottah into the hands of Tippu would be highly dangerous to his interests. Therefore, he started negotiations with the Dutch for purchasing these forts for Travancore. He sent his minister Kesava Pillay to negotiate with the Dutch. The Dutch decided to sell their forts to Travancore as they thought that Travancore would be able to check Tippu's progress to the south. The bargain was struck in July 1789. The Dutch possessions were sold for three lakhs of Rupees to be paid in several instalments<sup>1</sup>.

Even though Cranganore and Ayacottah were sold to Travancore, the Dutch retained their right over the Christians in these places and also over certain buildings and churches there. Special provisions were made in the agreement by which the "Lepers House" at Palliport, "the Romish Church" at Cranganore and Ayacottah, and "the Parson's house" at Palliport were to remain in the possession of the Dutch. Also "the Christians were to remain vassals of the Company and they were not to be burdened with any new tax."

It need not look strange that the Dutch sold these forts for three lakhs of Rupees to Travancore. This transaction was made after mature consideration by the authorities in Cochin and Batavia. From the very beginning the Malabar settlements have been a matter of considerable anxiety to the East India Company as the income derived from the Malabar trade was never commensurate with the expenses of Government. The Company's authorities in Batavia and Holland were always regretting that they had staked so much of their interest in Malabar. Governor General Mossel in great disgust wrote to Gollennesse, (who maintained that Malabar was one of the most important possessions of the Company,) that he "would rather wish that the ocean had swallowed up the coast of Malabar a hundred years ago". As early as 1696 the Dutch authorities had decided to

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 3.



reduce their fortifications in Cochin, Cranganore, Canannore and Quilon. The Batavia Government had passed a resolution on the 19th of August 1697 recommending to the Cochin Government the reduction of all their fortifications to the minimum level necessary for the interests of the Company. The sale of these fortresses was always welcomed by the authorities as an advantageous and necessary step.

The transactions concerning the Dutch forts were carried out in the presence of the English agent Powney. When the Madras Governor heard about the transaction, he disapproved of it under the wrong impression that these forts belonged to the Cochin Raja. He wrote to the Raja of Travancore as follows<sup>1</sup> :—

"I lament that you have taken the indiscreet step which may possibly involve you in much embarrassment if Tippu should be disposed to wrest from you these late acquisitions. I cannot approve of your having entered into a treaty with the Dutch for the extension of territory without the consent of this Government. This very impolite conduct makes you liable to the forfeiture of the Company's protection. . . . I therefore think it necessary you should immediately give back to the Dutch the places you have thus indiscreetly received from them and thereby establish your affairs precisely upon their former footing. I again recommend to you the greatest caution in your conduct towards Tippu." The Maharaja immediately explained to the English authorities at Madras, Bombay and Calcutta the propriety of his conduct. He pointed out to them that the Dutch were the real owners of these forts and as such the transaction should be valid. He explained to them that Cochin had no right whatsoever over these forts and therefore the Governor's assumptions were not right. He refuted the allegation that the transactions were made without the knowledge of the English as it was arranged in the presence of Powney, the English agent. Further, Major Bannerman had personally inspected these forts before the transaction was made. He also explained that his object in purchasing these territories was not mere extension of territories, but only the security of his dominions.

When Tippu heard about the attitude taken by the Madras Governor, he put forward his claims to the two forts on the ground

<sup>1</sup> Letter dated 30 Aug. 1789.

that they belonged to the Cochin Raja who was his tributary. Tippu sent one of his Sirdars to Travancore with a letter to the Raja. He demanded that the Travancore troops should be withdrawn from Cranganore. The Raja was again asked to surrender the refugees from Malabar. He should demolish that portion of the Travancore Lines which crossed the Cochin territory. Tippu also hinted that if the Raja failed to comply with his demands he could lead his forces against Travancore. The Raja replied that with regard to the withdrawal of troops from Cranganore, he would be guided by the Madras Governor. The Raja pleaded that he had not given asylum to any of the rebellious subjects of Tippu but only to those refugees who were his relations and dependants. He regretted that his moral principles did not allow him to surrender them to the Sultan. About the demolition of the Travancore Lines, the Raja said that they were in existence long before Cochin came under the protection of Mysore.

The Raja's reply naturally infuriated Tippu. Tippu sent another letter to the Raja accusing him severely of hostile intentions against Mysore. He bitterly attacked the Raja's conduct in giving protection to the rebellious Malabar chieftains and told the Raja that he should immediately hand them over. He again accused the Raja for his "highly improper" conduct in purchasing the Cranganore and Ayacottah forts which were in his territories. The Raja thought it better to keep silent over Tippu's accusations, but promptly kept the English Government informed of all developments.

Tippu sent a letter to the Dutch in November 1789 addressing them as "merchants in the Cochin fort which was under his protection". He claimed the Dutch as vassals under him in Cochin and accused them for allowing the Travancore Raja to occupy Cranganore. He informed them that unless they drove out the Travancore troops from Cranganore, they could not enjoy his friendship or kindness. He sent his envoy, Abdul Kadir, to the Dutch Governor to explain to him his attitude in the affair. The Dutch Governor replied that he valued Tippu's friendship greatly and that he was pleased to note that Tippu was favourably disposed to the Company. Regarding the Cranganore fort he said that the transaction was already over and it won't be possible to retrace the steps. Still he would try to do his best to deserve Tippu's friendship.



The correspondence between Tippu and the Dutch Governor shows that Tippu treated the Dutch as no better than ordinary merchants and the latter were not at all prepared to offend him<sup>1</sup>.

In December 1739 Tippu commenced his march against Travancore. He established his camp six miles to the north of the main entrance of the Travancore lines where he erected many batteries. Tippu marched with 14,000 infantry and 500 pioneers by a circuitous route guided by a native of the country towards the Travancore. He succeeded in taking possession of a considerable extent of the ramparts while the Travancore troops

1 *Tippu's letter to the Dutch in Cochin.*

காலு திங்கிலும் கல்பன கடத்துவரான ஆளுடே காவாலும் ஸ்தலித்  
கப்பட்டவரான எல்லாவர்க்கும் கல்பன கடத்துவரான காலுக்கு கான்  
ஜெயம் வர்த்திச்ச வகுநிறுவரான டிப்பு கல்தான் பாதர்ஷா கம்மால்  
ககிச்சப்பட்டவராக கொச்சித் கோட்டையில் இருக்கும் லெந்தகச்ச  
வடக்காரகு அறியவேண்டியதாவது. இப்பால் கீர் சர்க்காரோடே  
நிகேசமாக பகு கானாக கொச்சி ராஜா கைமயில் கொடுங்கல்லூர்  
கோட்டையில் கோழிக்கோட்டில் கம்முடைய குடியானவன் மாப  
போல கீரும் கொடுங்கல்லூரில் உம்முடே ஆளுகனும் ஆக இருந்தார்கள்.  
இப்போது அந்த இடத்தில் கீர் ராமராயகுடே ஆளுகனும் இடம்  
கொடுத்த அவர் கோழிக்கோட்டில் உள்ள கன்னர்க்கு ஆகான கொடுத்த  
சர்க்கார் கைமயில் கண்டப்தனம் செய்து வித்துக்கொண்டு இருக்கிறீர்.  
அதுனாலே உம்முடைய கெசகத்துக்கும் சேம கிருத்திக்கும் விக்கனம்  
வந்துபோச்சது. கொச்சிராஜா காலாரப்பமாத சர்க்காரே ஆகான  
செய்து வருகிறவருடேய கைமயில் கீரும் இருப்பதால் சர்க்காருடே  
குடியானவனுக்கேதே. ஆகையால் கீர் சர்க்காருக்கு செய்து வருகிற  
சேவகிருத்தியில் கத்தோஷம் வருத்தி வருத்தி வச்சிக்கொள்ளும்படி  
யாக கடத்துகொள்ளவும். அது உம்முக்கு கன்மையாக இருக்கவும்  
செய்யும். இப்போது அப்பர் காதரே அழ்விடத்துக்கு அனுப்பிவைக்க  
இருக்கிறோம். அவனுடைய முக வசனத்தால் காலமும் விசிதம் ஆகுமே.  
ஆகப்படியினாலே கொடுங்கல்லூர் கோட்டையில் இருக்கும் ராமராயா  
ராஜாக்கலே புரத்தாக்கிவிச்ச உம்முடே ஆளுகனே மாணாப்படிக்க  
வைத்த கடத்திக்கொண்டு சர்க்கார் கைமயில் இருந்து ஒளிச்ச வருகிற  
பேருக்கு இடம் கொடுக்காத கடத்துகொண்டால் உம்முடேய தயாவ  
உமக்கு உண்டாகவும் செய்யும். இது அறியவும், கன்னலின் டிசகம்  
பதினாந்தாம் தேதி சராஸாக்கா வர்ஷம் 1217ல் எழுதியது. ஸ்ரீவிவாய  
காயரு முன்சி.

retreated. Soon the Travancoreans made their stand in a small square enclosure and vigorously attacked the Mysore troops. Tippu brought re-inforcements to put pressure on the Travancore forces. But in the course of this encounter the officer commanding the Mysore army was killed and his whole army was thrown into confusion. The confusion became so great that the Sultan himself was thrown down into the crowd from his palanquin. He was only saved by the exertions of some steady and active "Ghelas who raised him on their shoulders and enabled him to ascend the counter scrap, after having twice fallen back in the attempt to clamber up; the lameness which occasionally continued until his death was occasioned by the severe contusions

### 1. The reply of the Dutch.

இப்பால் தாங்கள் வரகாட்டின பரமானுவும் வாலிருந்துகாண்மதால் விசிறம் ஆக. தங்களுடைய சினேகம் எப்போதும் நடப்பிலிச்சக் கொள்ளுகுறதற்கு உத்தம உலந்த கொம்புகியும் பிரபுத்திருக்கிறார். தங்களுடைய பரமானுத்திலும் அதுபோல காண்மதனால் நமக்கு மிகுதியும் சந்தோஷமாக்கது. இந்த சினேகம் வளர்ந்து எவ்வருகிற தர்க்க நாமும் வேலை செய்விக்கிறதில் குறைவருகிறதில்லை என்ற நிச்சயிக்கவேண்டியது. கொடுக்கல்லார் கோட்டை யூடே கார்யம் கொண்டு எழுதி வந்தது சரியே. அந்த இடம் ராமராஜா அவர்களுக்கு கிரயப் படுத்தி போக்கது. அய்விடத்திலே துஷ்டர்க்கு இடம் கொடுக்காவிடும் சர்க்கார் சீமையில் கடந்து தண்டத்தலம் செலுத்தி விக்கிடுக்கி லும் அவர்கள் சம்மதிக்கமாட்டார்கள். ஆகிலும் இதுகார்யத்தில் சம்மா லாயது மட்டும் தங்களுக்கு சந்தோஷம் அருத்தி விக்காதற்கு தங்களுடே . . . . ராமராஜா அவர்களுக்கு எழுதி அனுப்பிவிச்ச இருக்கிறோம். கொச்சி ராஜா உத்தம கும்பஞ்சியுடைய தற்கார் சகாயம் பெட்டுவருகிற சமாச்சாரங்களுக்கெல்லாம் அவர்கள் தங்களுக்கு எழுதி அனுப்பிவிச்சி விசிறப்படுத்தி வைப்பார்கள் என்ற நாம் நிச்சயித்திருக்கிறோம். இவர்கள் கார்யத்தில் சகாயிக்க தக்கதாக தங்களுடே பரமானுத்தல் தயவிருத்தி எழுதி வருவதால் இவர்கள் சம்முடைய கும்பஞ்சி அவர்களுக்கு காலாரப்ய மாக உன்ன பந்துவானதிலும் எந்த வேலைக்கும் ஏதும் ஒத்தாசை வைத்து நடத்திவிச்ச கொள்ளுகிறதற்கு சம்மே துணி பிரிபிக்கையும் சை ஆ இவ்விடத்தில் சம்மால் வேண்டிய கார்யங்களுக்கும் எழுதிவிச்ச அனுப்பும் படி சைவ இவண்டியது. வேணம் சலாம் கொச்சிக் கோட்டையில் சுவம்பர் மாசம் பத்தாம் தேதி 1789 ஆண்டு எழுத்தது.



he received on this occasion".<sup>1</sup> Tippu lost his state sword, signet ring and many other personal ornaments which were taken to Trivandrum by Dewan Kesava Pillay as trophies of victory.<sup>2</sup>

The Travancore Raja informed the English and the Nawab of Arcot everything that had taken place. But the Madras Governor was very lukewarm in his support to Travancore. He wrote to Tippu on the 1st of January 1790 assuring him that if his claims on Cranganore and Ayacottah were to be found equitable, "the English would cause those forts to be returned to the Dutch and placed on the same footing on which they were previous to the late purchase of them by the Raja of Travancore." But he also warned Tippu that any aggression on Travancore would be considered as a breach of friendly relations between the Company and Mysore. "It is our firm intention to do you justice on this occasion," he wrote "and it is scarcely necessary for us to say that we are equally determined to do justice to our own reputation and honour and it will be wise for you to wait the issue of a fair enquiry. If you are desirous of settling the points in contest by the investigation of commissioners, we will appoint one or more to meet such persons as may be appointed by you at any convenient place on the borders of our respective countries and you will then judge whether our intentions are fair." Tippu received this letter soon after his dismal defeat at Travancore. But he wrote to the Governor an ante-dated letter pretending to have written it before he received the Governor's letter<sup>3</sup>. In this letter Tippu stated that his troops while searching the fugitives were attacked by the Travancore forces; but as soon as Tippu heard about the war between the two troops he ordered his soldiers to return. He requested the Governor to advise the Raja to maintain friendly relations with him.

The attitude of the Madras Governor was in no way helpful to Travancore. But the Maharaja's appeal to the Governor

<sup>1</sup> History of Mysore. Wilks Vol. II P. 145.

<sup>2</sup> History of Travancore Sankuning Menon P. 228.

<sup>3</sup> Travancore State Manual Vol. I Ch. VI P. 396.

General had its desired effect. When the news of Tippu's attack on Travancore reached Cornwallis, he sent an urgent despatch to the Madras Governor instructing him to consider it as a declaration of war against the Company. He accused the Madras Governor of "a most criminal disobedience of the clear and explicit orders of the Government by not considering themselves to be at war with Tippu from the moment they heard of his attack on the Travancore lines." In his despatch to the Madras Government dated the 30th of March 1790 Cornwallis stated ".....I sincerely lament the disgraceful sacrifice, which you have made by that delay of the honour of your country by tamely suffering an insolent and cruel enemy to overwhelm the dominions of the Raja of Travancore; which we were bound by the most sacred ties of friendship and good faith to defend". Cornwallis sent two battalions of sepoys and one company of artillery under the command of Colonel Hartley to assist the Travancore army,

Tippu commenced his second attack on Travancore early in March 1790. He was 'deeply mortified and enraged' at the disastrous failure of his first attempt and he had taken a vow that he would not rest until he had rased to the ground the Travancore lines, "that contemptible wall". He had been strengthening his army by getting down re-inforcements from Seringapatam and Bangalore. Hostilities started with a skirmish between the Travancore and Mysore soldiers outside the walls on the 2nd of March. The Travancore army could not defend the fort in the face of the fierce artillery attacks of the Mysoreans. The English battalions did not give any help to the Travancore soldiers on the ground that they had no instructions to join the war. Therefore they were compelled to retreat. Tippu then turned against the Dutch fort of Cranganore. Cranganore was defended by the Travancore soldiers under the command of Captain Flory. But finding resistance fruitless they abandoned the fort and retreated to Travancore. Tippu's army under the leadership of Lally turned against the fort of Kuriappilli which was also abandoned by the Travancoreans. Tippu fulfilled his vow by demolishing the fortifications as soon as he captured these forts. Tippu him-



self took a pick-axe and inaugurated the destruction of that "contemptible wall".

Cochin fell an easy prey to the aggression of Tippu. Tippu established his head quarters at Trichur and carried on his work of devastation "desecrating the Hindu places of worship as well as both the public and private schools inside which cows were slaughtered to pollute them, the bodies of some of them being afterwards flung into the tanks, behind the bathing house of the Raja of Cochin." The Mysoreans seized the monastery at verapoly and plundered the religious establishments there.<sup>1</sup> The Cochin Raja, frightened at this course of events sent the women and children of his family to the Travancore Raja entrusting them to his hands.

Tippu marched into the Travancore territories and encamped on the northern side of the river Periyar, in Alwaye. But his march to the south was prevented by the floods in Periyar consequent on the outbreak of the South West Monsoons. Tippu waited for the flood to subside, but it only increased causing great inconvenience to Tippu and his soldiers. "His army had no shelter, no dry place for parade; all their ammunitions, accoutrements, etc., got wet. Even the very necessities of life were washed away by the impetuous current of the flooded river<sup>2</sup>". To add to his troubles Tippu heard about the advance of Lord Cornwallis against Seringapatam. Tippu thought it wise to collect all his forces and retreat so that he could save his own

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1 "He (Tippu) took a pick-axe himself and set an example which was followed by everyone present and the demolition of the wall was completed by his army without much delay. After this, the lawless force was let loose in the villages. They committed various atrocities and the country was laid waste with fire and sword. Some of the inhabitants fled for shelter to the wild hills of Kunnathnadu while many were taken captives. Hindu temples and Christian churches were equally desecrated by the followers of Mohomet. Towers of Pagodas, the houses of the rich and the huts of the poor all were burnt to ashes and the scenes throughout the districts of Alangad and Paravoor were heart rending. The ruins which may be seen up to the present date testify to the ferocity of the invaders. Records of antiquity secured in the archives of Pagodas, Palaces, Churches and the houses of the nobles were all committed to the flames".

Sankunni Menon. History of Travancore P. 232, 233.

2 Bartholomeo. A Voyage to the East Indies P. (141-42.)

3 History of Travancore. Sankunni Menon. P. 234.

capital. In the course of his hasty retreat, his army suffered many heavy losses. Like Napoleon retreating from Moscow, Tippu had to leave Travancore without realising his cherished dream.

The war between the English and Tippu came to a close in February 1792 by the treaty of Seringapatam. Tippu was compelled to cede one half of his dominions to the English. Among the districts he promised to cede he had included Alangad, Paroor and Kunnathunadu also which really belonged to Travancore. The Travancore Dewan Kesava Pillai made a representation to the English Government asserting the rights of Travancore over these districts. It was supported by Powney, the English Resident at Travancore who explicitly condemned the cession as 'altogether unwarrantable'. Lord Cornwallis also realised that it would be an act of great injustice on the part of the Company to deprive the Raja of these districts. Two commissioners were deputed to enquire into the disputes about the ownership of these territories. Meanwhile, the Cochin Raja also had put forward his claim on these taluqs. But, finally the Cochin Raja made a frank declaration acknowledging the legitimate claims of Travancore and the territories were recognised by the English as part of the Travancore State.

After the retreat of Tippu from Travancore the Malabar princes and Chieftains were restored to their original places. Dewan Kesava Pillai was deputed by the Travancore Raja to execute this grave task. He entered into special treaties with these princes that they should each supply a fixed quota of grain to Travancore and the English.

The Cochin Raja entered into a treaty with the English on the 6th January 1791. The Raja recognised the sovereignty of the English East India Company renouncing his allegiance to Mysore. The Company undertook to restore to the Raja the territories seized by Tippu, but the Raja was to administer these provinces as the vassals of the English. The Raja was to pay a

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1 The list of Rajas and Chiefs who took refuge in Travancore : -

Rajas 1. Zamorin. 2. Cherakkal. 3. Kottayam. 4. Kurumbanad.  
5. Vettathumadu. 6. Beypore. 7. Tanniore. 8. Palghat.  
Chiefs of 1. Koulaparay 2. Koringote 3. Kowghat. 4. Elathary  
5. Mannore.



tribute of 70,000 Rupees in the first year, 80,000 rupees in the second year, 90,000 Rupees in the third year and 100,000 rupees in the fourth. He was to pay 100,000 rupees in all the subsequent years in equal quarterly instalments. The sixth clause<sup>1</sup> of the treaty dealt with the Raja's relations with the Dutch. The English expressed their wish not to disturb the amicable relations of the Raja with the Dutch East India Company and expressly stated that their sovereignty was to be recognised only on those territories with which the Dutch had no concern. Before concluding the transactions with the Raja the English had requested the Dutch Council at Cochin to let them know the existing engagements between Cochin and the Dutch so that they could "avoid doing anything which might subsequently interfere with the good understanding that existed between the two Companies". The English deputed Powney to ascertain the details of the engagements of the Dutch in Cochin; but the Dutch Governor does not seem to have submitted the necessary particulars. However the English expressed their wish to maintain friendly relations with Dutch in Cochin. The Dutch Governor in Cochin was very anxious to prevent the extension of English influence in Malabar; but as circumstances did not allow the Dutch to take up a strong attitude against the English, he had to wink his eyes at these new developments. The Dutch realised perfectly well that "if the English were allowed to insert their little finger into the affairs of these regions, they would not rest until they had managed to thrust in the whole arm". The English had already thrust in their arm and it was only a question of time for them to thrust out the Dutch from Malabar. Anglebeck gives many glaring instances of the interference of the English in the affairs of Cochin. The Raja of Cochin was asked to submit all the documents dealing with the treaties he had entered into with Travancore

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1 Clause 6 of the treaty :—

"That owing to a treaty which exists between the Dutch Company and Rama Varma Raja of Cochin the Governor in Council of Madras, not wishing to enter into any engagements between these parties, resolved that Rama Varma Raja shall become tributary to the English East India Company, only in respect to such districts or places as are above enumerated and are at present in possession of Tippu Sultan and with which the Dutch East India Company have no concern".

2 Memoirs of Angelbeck.

and the Dutch. The Raja replied that he had no objection to produce them if he could get the Dutch Governor's consent. The Raja produced all the documents in a locked box and told the English agent that he could get the key from the Dutch Governor. The English agent Duncan approached the Dutch Governor and said in a very ironic way: "Well, sir, the Raja places much confidence in your great-kindness, but it occurs to me that he in this instance misuses it, by forcing upon you the trouble of unlocking a box". The Dutch had to suffer many such insults. They were perfectly conscious of the rapid decline of their power in Malabar.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE DESTRUCTION OF DUTCH POWER IN MALABAR

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THE Mysorean invasion brought about radical changes in the political system of Malabar. The most important of all was the transfer of sovereignty from the hands of the Dutch to the English. We have seen how the English managed to thrust 'their little finger' in Cochin which was the headquarters of the Dutch in Malabar. The Dutch lost practically all their influence in northern Malabar as the princes and chiefs there including the Zamorin had entered into new alliances with Travancore and the English. The northern princes clearly saw how helpless the Dutch themselves were in Malabar and naturally sought the protection of the stronger powers. Travancore also understood the value of a friendly alliance with the English and a treaty of perpetual friendship was signed on the 17th November 1795. The treaty stated "if any power or States nearer or remote, by sea or land shall, without aggression on the part of the Raja of Travancore, attempt or begin hostility and war upon the country of the said Raja or of his successors under such circumstances the expulsion of and the protection of the country against such enemies rest with the Company's Government." The sixth clause of the treaty stated:—"The reigning Raja of Travancore for the time being shall not keep in his service in any civil or military capacity nor allow to remain within his dominions as merchants or under any other plea or pretext the



subjects or citizens of any nation being at war with Great Britain or with the East India Company nor under any circumstances of peace or war allow any European nation to obtain settlements within the same nor enter into any new engagements with any European or Indian States without the previous concurrence of the British Government in India." This treaty clearly meant the establishment of the English sovereignty in Travancore and the destruction of the Dutch influence there.

The Dutch were following an entirely selfish policy in Malabar at that time. Their main policy was to keep friends with the most powerful state or prince and they did not care at all for previous treaty obligation or undertakings. It was this policy that alienated the support of all the princes of Malabar. When the power of Marthanda Varma was in the ascendancy, the Dutch sought his friendship and betrayed the interests of other Malabar States. When Tippu's power was dominant, they tried to cultivate his friendship by a meek policy of submission. But when they found Tippu thwarting all their overtures for friendship they turned to the English for help. The English were their greatest rivals in Malabar, still the exigencies of the situation compelled them to seek their help. The Dutch wrote to the Bengal Government saying that they were prepared to join sides with the English against Tippu. But the English did not take serious notice of this offer of help. The Dutch volunteered to give help to the Travancore Raja, the ally of the English and sent two commissioners Cellarius and Everydyck to the Raja's court. In August 1792, the Dutch Governor sought the assistance of the English again. Colonel Hartley who commanded the English army at Chettwaye informed the Dutch Governor Anglebeck that he would send help if the Dutch would bear all the expenses. Anglebeck replied that he only required two regiments—one of Europeans and another of native sepoys—to protect the coasts and he was prepared to share half the expenses in that connection. He pointed out to the English that even though these soldiers were required for the protection of Cochin, their presence would be helpful to the English also and as such it was but proper that the English should bear part of the expenses. Colonel Hartley replied that the troops had been already sent and the Dutch should bear the whole expense. Anglebeck gave no reply to this

and evaded the question of meeting the expenses. He even instructed his successor in Cochin to evade the question of bearing the expenses by following the tactics he had followed, viz., writing to the English frequently without committing to any decision.

The relations between Cochin and the Dutch were by no means cordial. The chief cause of dissension at this time was the claim of the Dutch over the Christians especially the Roman Catholics in Cochin. The Roman Catholics were carrying on a large scale policy of conversion among the "heathen vagabonds who had consented to this course to escape the punishments which their crimes deserved". When they became Christians they claimed immunity from punishment and thus the Raja realised the grave error of recognising the Company's authorities over all Christians. The Raja examined the original text of the treaty<sup>1</sup> between Cochin and the Dutch and understood that there was a serious mistake in the Dutch version of the treaty. The treaty had recognised the rights of the Dutch over the 'Mundukars' or the Roman Catholics. But the Dutch version of the treaty contained in it a clause interpreting "Mundukars" to mean all the Christians. The Raja held that that interpretation was wrong and it was not contained in the Malayalam text of the treaty. The Raja was supported by Mr. Powney in this claim, but Anglebeck refused to yield. Finally the question was settled in favour of the Dutch through the mediation of Mr. Powney.

Another cause of dispute between the Dutch and the Raja was about the slaughter of cows by the Christians in Cochin. The Raja wanted to prevent the slaughter of cows in his territories and wrote to Governor Anglebeck how the Christians were violating his orders. Anglebeck promised to give suitable punishments to the offenders.

The dispute between Cochin and the Dutch over the question of the Konkanyes was a long standing one. The Konkanyes had a sacred idol at Thirumala Devaswom. The Raja demanded from the Devaswom a substantial contribution for the celebration of the festival at Thripoonithurai. When the Konkanyes refused to comply with the Raja's demands, the Raja ordered them to be punished. Captain Pannikkar and two soldiers seized Deva-

<sup>1</sup> Treaty of 1663—March 20.



resekini a chief of the Devasthanom and beheaded him. The Raja's soldiers plundered the Konkarnies' possessions and seized all the treasuries of the Devaswom. The temple priests managed to send their sacred idol to the Dutch fort to be kept in their custody. The Dutch were infuriated at the conduct of the Cochin soldiers against the Konkarnies who were in their protection and demanded an explanation from the Raja. The Raja boldly replied that all the Hindus in his territory were under his authority and the Dutch should mind their own business and not interfere in the affairs of his administration. In October 1791, the Dutch marched against the Cochin Raja's palace at Mattancherry. There was a skirmish between the Raja's troops and the Company's soldiers. The Raja was planning to attack the Dutch fort at Cochin. But the English agent Powney interfered and brought about a reconciliation, avoiding an open conflict.

Van Anglebeck was succeeded by Van Spall as Governor of Cochin in 1794. He was the last Dutch Governor of Cochin. The power of the Dutch in the east was steadily declining while their home country itself was subjected to foreign invasion. On January 8th the French Republican army invaded Holland and the Stadtholder fled to England. The English and the Dutch were allies in Europe fighting against the common foe the French Republican Government. When Holland was invaded by the French, the English took measures to prevent the Dutch settlements from falling into the hands of the French. On February 7, 1795 the following proclamation was issued by the Dutch authorities to all their Governors and Commandants in Oversea possessions:—"We have thought it necessary to write to you that His Britannic Majesty's troops shall be admitted and take possession of the forts in our colonies, and that they are to be considered as the troops of a kingdom in friendship and alliance with their Mightinesses, in case the colonies should be summoned by the French". But the danger to the Dutch in Malabar was not from the French, but from the English. The Dutch Governor was making busy preparations in Cochin anticipating an invasion of the English. The English also made no secret of their intentions. They warned the Cochin Raja that he should in no way assist the Dutch, but on the contrary should prevent their domination in his territories. The Raja, being a tributary of the English, promised to do as directed.

Major Petrie marched from Calicut to Cochin with two battalions of European soldiers and one battalion of native infantry. He had been given instructions to secure a peaceful entrance into the Dutch settlements. If the Dutch would allow this "the Governor and Council were not to be molested and all private property and the rights of individuals were to be left unaltered. The ostensible object of the English was to prevent the fort from falling into the hands of the French. But if the Dutch refused admission to the fort, Petrie was authorised to make a forcible entry. Governor Van Spall was not prepared to surrender the fort to the English and he was making preparations to defend the siege. Mr. Stevens the English agent went over to the Cochin fort to bring about an understanding between Major Petrie and Van Spall. A conference was held on the night of September 6th, 1795 when Van Spall agreed to surrender the fort without resistance. But he wanted to obtain the consent of his council before executing his promise. The English suspected that Van Spall was only trying to evade the issue and therefore decided to seize the fort by force. A new army was sent from Tellicherry to assist Major Petrie. Petrie commenced operations on the night of October 19. Van Spall realised that resistance was of no avail and revived the negotiations for peace. On the 20th October 1795 the Dutch surrendered the fort to the English. Van Spall's proposals for peace were not entirely accepted by the English. The Dutch Governor suggested that all officers and soldiers who were in Cochin should be transported either to Batavia or Ceylon at the expense of the English Government. But this request was not granted. Petrie reserved the right to dispose of the Dutch garrison as he pleased. Van Spall proposed that the funds belonging to the Orphan College and poor house should not be confiscated. He also proposed that the fortifications, Government house and other public buildings belonging to the Company should be left as they were and not demolished. But the English replied that these matters would be decided at their discretion.

The Dutch flag ceased to fly over Malabar from October 19th 1795. What the Dutch seized from the Portuguese, they surrendered to the English. We have already examined how the English managed to oust the Dutch from Travancore by the treaty they signed with the Raja. We have also referred to the establishment



of English influence in North Malabar. When the exiled chieftains of North Malabar and the Zamorin of Calicut returned to their respective countries, they understood that the Dutch no longer held any pretence of suzerainty in Malabar.<sup>1</sup> The Zamorin realised that he owed his position entirely to the English and Travancore and that the former were destined to be his masters. Lord Cornwallis sent General Abercromby, the Governor of Bombay, to settle the affairs in Malabar. Abercromby sent two commissioners to enter into agreements with the Malabar chieftains on behalf of the English. The commissioners allowed the chieftains of Chirakkal, Kottayam and Kadathanad to be in charge of their own territories, but signed special agreements with them which recognised the rights and privileges of the English. The Zamorin of Calicut, the most prominent of the Rajas in northern Malabar, had enthroned himself "without the concurrence or assent of any officer of the Company's Government." The Zamorin had assumed authority claiming all his ancient rights and privileges. But the English entered into a treaty with the Zamorin on August 18, 1792 which practically placed

1 With Cochin, there also passed into the hands of the British the Dutch (formerly Portuguese) settlements of Tangasseri on the point of land lying west of Quilon Bay and the following petty places :—

1. Thumboli Pattam
  2. Kattur Pattam
  3. Attalakkad Pattam
  4. Manakkodat Pattam
  5. Antony Fernandez Pattam
  6. Thekke Purupunkara Pattam
  7. Mundenvelli Pattam
  8. Domingo Fernandez Palakkal Pattam
  9. Santiago Pattam
  10. Taiveppu Pattam
  11. Blichro Rodrigues Pattam
  12. Saint Louis Pattam
  13. Dural Lemos Pattam
  14. Ramanthuruthi Pattam
  15. Sondikalgnvankurie Silva Pattam
  16. Palliport Hospital Paramba
- Malabar Manual. Logan. P. 717

Calicut at the disposal of the English Company. The Zamorin was to administer his territories as a lease holder of the English. Even in the matter of appointment of his ministers, the Zamorin was to obtain the previous consent of the English. In 1795 the English signed a new treaty with the Zamorin, which further placed the Zamorin at the mercy of the English. In 1798 the Zamorin practically relinquished his sovereign rights ; in July 1800 his territories were transferred to the Madras Presidency.

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## CHAPTER X

### THE DUTCH AND THEIR EUROPEAN RIVALS IN MALABAR.

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THE Dutch settlement in Malabar was only one among the many they had in the East. They had established their headquarters in the Malaya Archipelago and strengthened their position in Ceylon before they had ventured on an attack on Malabar. But their European rivals in the East had concentrated their attention mainly on their settlements in India. To the Dutch, the loss of their Indian settlements did not mean the loss of their Empire in the East. They continued their suzerain authority in other parts of the Oriental World. But, that was not the case with the Portuguese. When the Portuguese were driven out of Malabar, they were driven out of India. And when they lost their possessions in India, they held no more in the East. The two important European rivals for the Dutch in the East were the Portuguese and the English. The Dutch gained the mastery of Malabar by seizing it from the Portuguese ; they lost it when the English seized it from their hands. Even though the French had political designs over Malabar, they could not achieve their objects as their ingenious plans came to no good.

When Holland liberated herself from the shackles of Spain, the decline of the Portuguese power in the East commenced. The Dutch, flushed with a new enthusiasm and consciousness of their independence turned their attention towards the East,



determined to oust the Portuguese from their territories. The Portuguese—the pioneers of European colonisation of the East—had been enjoying a position of undisputed sovereignty in India for a period of one hundred years. The profligate wealth the Portuguese had amassed in India and the great ease with which they could carry on their administration had fostered degeneracy. "The Portuguese policy of conquest, conversion and commerce had its halcyon days. Now, elements of deterioration and decay had begun to eat into the vitals of the Portuguese Empire in the East. The sudden acquisition of illgotten wealth and easy subjugation of vast tracts had turned the heads of the proud Portuguese officials. The race of heroes such as Albuquerque and Pachecos had given place to a base set of captains and administrators whose only thought was money."<sup>1</sup> But as Hunter<sup>2</sup> observes if the system produced bitter fruits in Asia, it had its roots in Portugal itself. The Portuguese Empire was ill-managed both at home and abroad. This was the condition of the Portuguese power in the East when it was challenged by its powerful rival Holland. The Portuguese "who aimed at an Empire in India both spiritual and temporal, at wholesale conversion effected by conviction, bribery and fraud or violence, who considered no expenditure too large to effect their object, whose self-love had alienated all friends, and injustice created many enemies, were now on the eve of resigning their authority to others. Another power was now to become predominant in the East, another race was to try their hand at supremacy and another religion to be introduced".

When the Portuguese saw the appearance of a powerful rival in their undisputed domains, they knew that they should strengthen themselves for self-protection. In the early years they seem to have been confident of keeping their own position. The Portuguese Viceroy wrote to his king in 1635 that he would easily get the better of the Dutch as "the Dutch were every where cordially hated and only succeeded in carrying on trade by means of the forces at their disposal." But the Dutch were more confident of

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1. K. P. P. Menon. History of Kerala. Vol: I. P. 183.
  2. Hunter. History of Br. India. Vol: I. P. 183.
  3. Day. Land of the Perumal. P. 114—115.

securing the supremacy in India. Dee Weert had very early clearly foreseen that when the Portuguese were turned out of Cochin they would be out of India. As early as 1658 Van Goens was making busy preparations for ousting the Portuguese from Malabar. He wrote to the Governor General for re-inforcements and assured him of easy victory over the Portuguese. "We could make an attempt on Cochin where the Portuguese could collect their strongest naval forces," wrote Goens, "and if we are so lucky as to defeat them, the whole coast of Malabar and the pepper trade will be ours." When the Portuguese realised their dangerous position, they wrote to the king of Portugal for further reinforcements. They clearly acquainted the king of the real state of affairs in India and informed him that unless they were properly assisted, the whole of their possessions would be lost.<sup>1</sup> "We earnestly implore Your Majesty," the Portuguese Governors wrote, "to send us by next year adequate re-inforcements, otherwise, we shall not be able to resist the enemy at all." But the re-inforcements which the Portuguese received were not of much avail in their attempts to maintain their possessions in Malabar. We have seen how the Portuguese were compelled to surrender the "town of Cochin with all its jurisdictions, income and lands with all documents and papers referring to the same and whatever else that may be there held in the name of the king of Portugal".<sup>2</sup> The Dutch allowed all unmarried true born Portuguese to be sent back to Europe. The married Portuguese and Mestizoes were to be sent to Goa. After the surrender of the Cochin fort the Portuguese did not make any serious attempt to assert their power in Malabar. The Dutch were left almost undisputed masters of the territories they had acquired by conquest.

The Dutch, however, seem to have been carefully watching the plans of the Portuguese. They knew that if they were to quit Cochin, the Portuguese would endeavour to obtain possession of it. Visscher<sup>3</sup> says in this connection, "They already affect to have claims upon it, and say arrogantly enough that the Company are keeping it for their king." Moens also in his

1. Letter dated 18th December 1658.

2. Treaty dated 7th January 1663.

3. Visscher letter No. 3.



memoirs says that there were various rumours regarding the preparations the Portuguese were making for re-instating themselves in India. The Portuguese were really making some preparations by strengthening their army in Goa. But whether it was for an attempt to regain their lost possessions or only for defensive purposes, is not certain.<sup>1</sup>

The Danes were comparatively insignificant rivals for the Dutch in Malabar. The Danes had some trade settlements in the Malabar Coast, but their interests in Malabar were purely commercial. Sometimes they supplied the local Rajas with arms in return for which they received pepper as is evident from the following letter by an English chief at Anjengo (1757):— "As the Dutch on one side supplied him (Travancore) with arms, etc., and the Danes and other Europeans at times did the same at Coletchy (Kolachel) for which they got pepper, he withheld pepper from us under the pretence that we showed ourselves less friendly to him than others". The Danes had only two factories in Malabar—one at Edava and another at Colachel. Hamilton describes the Dane settlement at Edava as follows:—"The Danes have a small factory here standing on the sea-side. It is a thatched house of a very mean aspect and their trade answers every way to the figure their factory makes".<sup>2</sup> Their Kolachel factory also was nothing more than a small store house. Still the Dutch were complaining about the 'jealousy' of the Danes at Calicut who were furnishing the Zamorin, the enemy of the Dutch, with arms and ammunition.

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1 "Volume 13 of *Vadulandsche D. Historie*, Page 378 says that in the year 1669 it was agreed between Portugal and Holland that Cochin and Cannanore would remain Dutch as a pledge for arrears which were still due to the States by Portugal. Why so, is a puzzle to which I can suggest no solution. The history does not say whether these arrears have ever been paid or whether any fresh settlement effected. But it is said that the Portuguese would have got the town if they were willing to make compensation for the expenses incurred by the Dutch; but this amount was so large that they could not pay".

Quoted by Mr. K. P. P. Menon in *History of Kerala*.

2 Fort St. George Records. Quoted by Galletti in his introduction to "Dutch in Malabar".

3. Pinkerton "Collection of voyages and Travels" Vol. VIII p. 383.

The greatest of European rivals for the Dutch in Malabar, as we have seen, were the English. The main reason for the rivalry between the Dutch and the English was of course the ambition of both to secure the monopoly of eastern trade. The large profits made by the Dutch had excited the jealousy of the English and induced them to try a hand for the monopoly of trade. Visscher<sup>1</sup> writes "The trade of the East India Company, so famous throughout the world, one of the main stays of our country, and the resource of thousands of poor creatures who make their livelihood by the employment it affords them, has been greatly undermined by the English. . . . . At Cochin we see at least thirty English vessels, large and small, in the course of the year which perform the transit between the neighbouring regions and put in here chiefly for the sake of provisions". Visscher also observes that the English trade at that time was not so vigorous as the Dutch. The Dutch Company had the complete support of the home Government, while the English East India Company was a purely private concern. "The English Company was the weakling child of the old age of Elizabeth and of the shifty policy of King James", observes Hunter, "while, the Dutch Company was the strong outgrowth of the life and death struggle of a new nation with its new Spanish oppressors." The patronage of the Netherlands Government strengthened the Company's position in India and the Dutch were able to maintain their supremacy unchallenged throughout the 17th century. But soon, the "weakling child" of England grew up into a sturdy youth and the position of the Dutch was seriously endangered. Even though England and Holland were at peace with one another in Europe, their Companies in the East were making use of every opportunity to ruin each other's prospects. Both Companies resorted to all methods—fair or foul—to achieve their objects in the East.

The Comparative position of the two companies in India in the 18th century may be understood from the following facts gathered from an article in the *Madras Mail* dated 18th February 1902 :—"An illustration of the relative position of the two rivals at the beginning of the 18th century is afforded by a few

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1. Visscher's Letters VII.



unpublished manuscripts in the British museum that possesses some claim on the attention of your readers..... It appears that on the 23rd November 1709, two Dutch ships, one of 30 guns and the other of 20 and the Dutch brigantine arrived off Calicut and anchored opposite the British factory there. On the 24th they approached nearer the shore, dropped anchor and promptly fired about 300 shots at the town, but did no damage beyond killing 'one Muckwa' boy and one goldsmith's boy and wounding a moor woman. The Dutch Commodore now called upon the masters of three native vessels in the roads and the Portuguese master of a British Ketch to proceed on board his ship. The master of the British Ketch obeyed the order and was then directed to land and warn the British factory to take care of themselves, for the Dutch were resolved to burn, sink and destroy all they could and that if the factory wanted goods, they might go with the ships to Cochin, but the Dutch could suffer none to be shipped at Calicut. The factory sent an English representative to the Dutch Commodore to state that no notice could be taken of his verbal message and to desire that if he had anything to say he would communicate it in writing and in English too as they were unacquainted with Dutch. But the Commodore replied that he was unacquainted with English, so he again sent a verbal message and warned the factory to be careful for "powder and balls had no eye"....The Dutch sailed away from Calicut to Chittoa where they encountered no opposition as the Zamorin had been unable to raise a force to protect the place. They landed, raised palisades and laid the foundations of a fort on a spot of ground formerly granted to the English East India Company. They pulled down the house wherein the Company had been wont to store its purchases of pepper after sifting it of all that was in it, while they threatened the servants of the company whom they found there, that if they did not leave immediately they would be put in irons and shipped off as prisoners to Batavia. Then the Dutch returned to their ships and set sail for Anjengo where the English company had another factory....The Bombay Government found it difficult to believe that, during the maintenance of a strict alliance between England and the Netherlands the Dutch would venture to publicly aid the 'King of Alleng' in his designs

on the English factories at Anjengo 'although by underhand dealings they have created a difference which they strove to forment into an open rupture.'<sup>1</sup>

The following accounts given by Mr. Grose who had an extensive travel in the Malabar coasts, give an idea about the rivalry of the Dutch and the English in the 18th century. "As mere traders, the English would never have got the footing they had, if they had not added to that character the profession of arms both at land and sea.... The Dutch especially insult us in their insinuations to the country Governments of our inferiority in that we are not possessed of a head place of arms, such as Batavia is to them, from whence our operations might be more timely and more effectually applied to any exigence than as there now exists a necessity for waiting for orders and aids from Europe. They do not consider or at least do not add a candid confession of the treacherous and cruel supplantment of us in a time of full peace in the Spice Islands which are the mines, from whence they draw the means of supporting the extraordinary charges of that their boasted capital place in India, a competition with which our trade, circumstanced as it has been since that fatal epoch could never well afford.... One of the reasons that the Dutch East India Company flourishes and is become more rich and powerful than all the others is, its being absolute and invested with a kind of sovereignty and dominion more especially over the many ports, provinces and colonies it possesses in those parts. For it appoints magistrates, admirals, generals and governors, sends and receives embassies from kings and sovereign princes; makes peace and war at pleasure; and by its own authority administers justice to all. The power of the Dutch by sea and land is very great in the East Indies, where by force, adress and alliance they raised themselves and still support a great superiority in spite of the English Portuguese and other Europeans that have some trade there; but so inconsiderable are those that all of them together do not enjoy what the Hollanders enjoy. The Hollanders gave law to the very English, in 1662,

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1. Ref Article entitled "Dutch Ascendancy in India. Its enforcement in Malabar in 1709" Published in the Madras Mail of the 18th Feb. 1902 quoted by K. P. P. Menon in History of Kerala Vol. I. P. 385-390.



obliging them to a peace very advantageous to Holland and their East India Company in particular after a bloody and expensive war that arose from jealousy and the rivalry in commerce."

Even though the Dutch and the English did not openly come to a conflict in the early stages, there was a bitter competition between the two for the establishment of trade and political prerogatives. The Dutch suspected the English to be intriguing with their enemies and inciting the local chieftains to rebellions. Visscher speaks of Mr. Adams the head of the English in Malabar as an "enemy" of the Dutch Company, "Being an enemy to our company". Visscher<sup>2</sup> writes, "he incited the Zamorin to the late war, himself lending in order to promote it 100,000 rix dollars with which that prince defrayed the expenses of the war. We have no reason to doubt this story, since he even sent English Officers to assist the Zamorin to defend fort Paponetty against our arms. Nay, more, when Chettwaye was conquered by the Zamorin and our people expelled the English immediately erected a factory there in order to secure the pepper trade." Visscher concludes from all these that the Dutch "have but little good to expect from the English". "The English cannot but look with envious eyes upon the great influence our company possesses in India and the confidence they inspire among the nations with whom they trade. It would be better if our neighbours would examine more closely into their own behaviour and see whether their arrogance is not the cause of the mistrust and dislike with which they are regarded". Visscher's allegations against Mr. Adams are further substantiated by the accounts of Hamilton and others. Hamilton clearly asserts that part of the money spent by the Zamorin in his war with the Dutch was borrowed from the English. The Tellicherry records also prove that loans were given by Mr. Adams to the Zamorin, the Punnathur Raja and the Kolathiri prince.

Even though the Dutch and their European rivals were "intriguing against one another, with native princes, supplying one another's enemies and harbouring one another's deserters", there was general peace between them. The Dutch at Cochin

1. Ref. Grose "Voyage" East Indies. Vol. II P 256-258.

2. Visschers letter No. 3.

were very polite and courteous in their relations with their European rivals. Foreign ships could visit their port at Cochin and they used to receive foreigners in their fort with great courtesy. Galletti in this connection makes reference to one James Forbes a servant of the English East India Company who wrote in his Oriental Memoirs that during his visits to Cochin on his company's business he always received the kindest attention from the Governor and the principal inhabitants. The English and the Dutch seem to have joined in a combined expedition against the pirates in 1750. When the English at Tellicherry were attacked by Hyder Ali, the Dutch Governor wrote courteous letters to the English and even complied with their requisitions for supplies. This may be because of the fact that Hyder was the common enemy of both the English and the Dutch. Later when Tippu invaded the Travancore lines and threatened an invasion of the Cochin Fort, we find the Dutch applying to the English for help. The Dutch proposed a joint action against the Mysoreans. But, the English gave only an evasive reply to the overtures of the Dutch. Before the final expulsion of the Dutch from Cochin, the English had gained a depot there. Galletti quotes a letter from Col. Hartley which states "having a greater quantity of stores and ammunition than is immediately wanted to the field, I have made a depot at Cochin, the Governor Mynheer Anglebeck readily offering every assistance."<sup>1</sup>

The Dutch and the English in Malabar blamed each other for misgovernment and tyranny. Visscher's letters contain descriptive details of the high handed policy of the English in Malabar especially in Anjengo and Attingal. Visscher also tries to bring out details about the oppressive administration of Tellicherry and other parts by the English. The English also were laying special emphasis on the unpopularity of the Dutch in the west coast. We find the Governor of Fort Marlborough writing to the Governor of Fort St. George that the Dutch Government was everywhere abhorred by the country people and that the appearance of ships alone at some settlements would occasion a revolt. The fact is that the Malabar people liked

1. Military consultations. Vol. 133 in the Fort St. George Records.



neither the English nor the Dutch even though both claimed the support of the people.

The Dutch had very little to do with the French in India. The settlements of the French in India were too weak to be counted as rivals for the Dutch. Their factory as Dr. Fryer says was better stored with *monsieurs* than with cash. The French had established a temporary settlement at Tellicherry before the English had established theirs. But their business in Tellicherry was very insignificant. Occasionally we find the Dutch Governors complaining of the supplies of arms given by the French to the native chieftains. But the French attempted to contest for supremacy in Malabar only after the Dutch had left it.

## CHAPTER XI.

### POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF MALABAR IN THE DUTCH PERIOD.

VISSCHER'S letters contain interesting details about the political and social conditions of Malabar in the 18th century. Even though most of his observations are correct he showed a tendency to stress those facts which he thought would provide interesting reading to his countrymen in Holland. In this respect his accounts suffer from the usual defects as are characteristic of the records of all foreign writers.

Malabar has never been a single political unit, if we ignore the traditional account of Cheraman Perumal's sovereignty. Foreign travellers in Malabar in the 14th century note that the country was divided among twelve kings. Ibn Batuta observes "In this country of Malabar are twelve kings, the greatest of whom has 50,000 troops at his command." The reference here to the greatest of the Malabar kings is probably the Zamorin. When the Portuguese visited Malabar, they found the country divided among a multiplicity of princes and chieftains. Gollenne in his memoirs mentions about more than forty five chieftains in Malabar. Moens notes that the chief princes of Malabar were the Zamorin of Calicut, the Rajas of Cochin and Travancore and the Kolathiri. He also makes mention of the

large number of local chieftains and nobles in Malabar who enjoyed a partial degree of sovereign authority. But these chieftains were subordinate to the four principal Swaroopams of Nediyrippu (Calicut), Perimbatappu (Cochin), Thrippappil (Travancore) and Kolathunadu (Kolathiri).

We have seen how these different princes were in frequent wars with one another. The accounts of Fra. Bartolomeo relating to the political situation in Malabar are worth quoting. "The princes who were not unanimous among themselves attacked each other's territories; carried away their subjects as captives, excited the chief men against one another, deprived several families of their property and as they were too weak to subdue an opulent and high spirited people gave to some private individuals full freedom to revenge the injuries which they had suffered". In some respects the political condition of Malabar in the beginning of the 18th century bears resemblance to that of Italy before it was united under the house of Savoy. But Malabar had no Cavour with lofty schemes of political unification or no Garibaldi with a daring zeal of selfless patriotism. The military activities of Marthanda Varma were the outcome of an inordinate personal ambition. He was never inspired by any sentiment of national unification or patriotism. His great achievements were the annihilation of the feudal nobility and the creation of the powerful State of Travancore. The Raja of Cochin no doubt had to concede some territories to Marthanda Varma. The Zamorin of Calicut had to give up his political designs over southern Malabar. Towards the end of the Dutch period we find the powerful State of Travancore in the south with extensive territories, Cochin shorn of her possessions in the south, and the Zamorin confined to his territories in the north. The Kolathiri ceased to be a ruling power. It was only a question of time for the Zamorin to bear the fate of the Kolathiri.

The Dutch period in Malabar is significant as it witnessed the fall of the Nair nobility. The Nair chiefs of Malabar even though they recognised the authority of the Kshatriya princes, were de-facto sovereigns in their own estates. Logan says that the position which was occupied by the Nairs in the civil and



military organisation of Malabar was the central point of interest in any descriptive and historical account of the Malayalee race. "It was a position" he says "so unique and so lasting that but for foreign intervention there seems no reason why it should not have continued for centuries to come. Their functions in the body politic have been wisely described in their own traditions as "the eye", "the hand" and "the order." Logan also refers to the martial spirit and traditions of the Nairs. This martial spirit was kept up by their frequent wars with one another. They had also their own systems of duels and 'kutippaka.' The latter was a custom by which the chieftains took revenge for any murder in the family. There were institutions known as 'kalaris' to give training for the people in the art of warfare. The Kalari was a gymnasium where practical instruction in fighting was given by an 'asan' or experienced veteran teacher. The Malabar princes had large numbers of trained Nair warriors in their services. The strength of a prince depended mainly upon his Nair force. We have already seen the great part played by the Nair forces in the wars of Malabar. The Nair soldiers were directly under their Nadu Vazhis whose services were requisitioned by the princes. "The Nadu Vazhi was the military chief of the district and was bound to attend the Raja on the field, or march wherever he was directed with all the fighting men of his district, under the Desavazhis or heads of their respective villages. It was also his duty in times of peace to assemble the Nairs of his district every two or three years in order to exhibit in the presence of the Raja, a mock or rather real fight with the Nairs of another district.....These combats were instituted with a view of keeping up the martial spirit of the Nairs."

With the destruction of the power of the Nair nobles, their martial spirit also declined. We have seen how Marthanda Varma succeeded in stamping out Nair predominance in his country. The destruction of the Ettu Veetil Pillamars marked the end of Nair hegemony in Malabar. This policy was followed by the Cochin Raja also and we have seen how in his country too the power of the Nairs came to an end. The destruction of

the power of the Nairs in Calicut was not the work of its king. It was carried out by the Mysorean invaders. By a vigorous policy of persecution, Tippu broke the backbone of the Nair nobility in North Malabar. The destruction of the power of the feudal nobles brought about a complete change in the social and political system of Malabar. Its direct result was the centralisation of the political power. It strengthened the tyrannical position of the ruling chieftains. As Logan observes the Nair nobles had formed the bulwark against the tyranny and oppression of their own rulers. Now this bulwark was destroyed.

Even though the Nairs were the predominant people in Malabar, the Namboodiries too were fairly prominent. Visscher notes that the Namboodiries were 'exercising secular authority.'<sup>1</sup> They were "the possessors of certain domains with Nairs or soldiers in their service over whom they had the power of capital punishment."<sup>2</sup> "They had also the patronage of all offices and dignities within their territories.....they were also sometimes lords over certain territories exercising the right of making war." The Namboodiries were generally rich land lords and as such they commanded great influence in the country. Some Namboodiri brahmins were sovereign kings, for example the Namboodiri Rajas of Etapalli, Porakkad, Paroor, etc.

Besides the Namboodiries there were the 'Caimals'<sup>3</sup> and 'Rasidoors.' The Caimals, were temporal potentates, possessing the right of making war. Some of them were subject to the princes in whose territories they are situated, but others were independent; the difference depended on the privilege they received in ancient times. Visscher says there

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1. Visscher letter No. XIII.

2. The tradition of Malabar is that the country was given to the Namboodiries by Parasurama. The Namboodiries ruled over the country for some time. Later with the rise of monarchical system the Namboodiries had to give up much of their secular authority. There were however a few sovereign rulers among them eg: the Rajas of Edappalli, Porakad & Parur.

3. The Caimals were the principal nobles of the country. Some petty rulers were also known as 'Caimals' and 'Karthavus' eg. "Kodaser Karthavu" "Mangattu Kaimal."



were about fifty Caimals in Cochin alone. "Rasidoors were lords who have been raised by the Raja's to certain commands over the army or country. In many places they were appointed to govern a district or town in the name of the prince." Besides these chieftains there was another class of Menons whose chief work was to write the letters of their Raja. Menon was the title conferred by the Rajas on the Nairs. Visscher says there were higher titles than Menon like 'Menon Mare'<sup>2</sup> and 'Goerype' (Kurup).

Special mention has been made about the Syrian Christians of Malabar by all the Dutch writers. Visscher writes that all Christians in Malabar were divisible into three classes—"the Europeans, the principal of whom were the Portuguese, the English and the Dutch; the Topasses, who sprang from mixed races of whites and Indians and the native Christians of unmixed race." The native Christians were divided into two groups, viz., new Christians and St. Thomas Christians. The new Christians were mostly converts from low castes. The St. Thomas Christians or Syrian Christians believe that they have been

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1. The Malabar Raja's used to employ large number of scribes to look after their secretarial work. Palmyra leaves were used for writing purposes. These royal scribes were hereditary dignitaries having special rights and privileges traditionally attached to their office. Barbosa gives the following account about the royal scribes at Calicut:—

"The King of Calicut keeps many clerks constantly in his place; they are all in one room, separate and far from the King, sitting on benches and they write all the affairs of the Kings' revenue and his alms and that which is given at all and the complaints which are presented to the King and at the same time the account of the collectors of taxes. All this is on broad stiff leaves of the palm tree, without ink, with pens of iron."

Ref. Barbosa "Description of the coasts of Africa and Malabar in the beginning of the 16th century" P 110.

2. 'Menon Mare' "This is no higher dignity being simply the plural form of the singular Menon, meaning scribe. The title of Menon is conferred by the Raja on Nairs. The applicant presents himself before the Raja and pays a small sum of money, not exceeding Rs 6 and the Raja if the application is accepted, calls him by his name with the term 'Menon' added three times over, and he is thenceforward styled Menon by all."

Ref. K. F. P. Menon, History of Kerala Vol. II P. 425—26.

originally converted by the Apostle St. Thomas himself—a tale in Visscher's<sup>1</sup> opinion, not to be scoffed at. They are called Syrians because their churches were under the supervision of Syrian Bishops and they followed the Syrian language for their church rites. Among the Syrian Christians there were Roman Catholics also. The Syrians had suffered many persecutions from the papists and Visscher notes that many of their churches have been seized by the Roman Catholics in the time of the Portuguese.

Moens makes some observations about the history of the Syrian Christians in Malabar. In 1751 three Syrian bishops were sent to Malabar by the patriarch of Antioch. When they first arrived at 'bassora in Persia' they were kindly received by the officers of the Dutch Company there. They were brought to Malabar in one of the Company's ships. "During their stay in Cochin they were assigned suitable lodgings by the Dutch Commander and shown every courtesy, Mar Thome, the local Syrian bishop, refused to pay respects to the visitors. The Dutch commander was going to have him brought to Cochin by force, but he came to hear of it and fled inland and they could not lay hands on him". In 1753 on the occasion of a meeting between the king of Travancore and the Dutch Commander, the three Syrian bishops were introduced to the king and recommended for his special protection. The Syrian Christians in the Dutch period were always engaged in party quarrels and fights.

The Roman Catholics were numerically superior to the Syrian Christians. Visscher notes that in his time they had two Bishops and one Archbishop. The Archbishop had his residence at "Ambekatt a few leagues from Cochin." The Dutch Commander used to show great respect to the Romish Bishops "saluting them with a display of arms and firing of cannon, showing to them the same honour as to Kings." There was a Roman Bishop at Cranganore who was under the protection of the Company. There was no fear for the Dutch that the Romish priests would intrigue with the Portuguese against them as the Portuguese and these priests were always at variance with one another.

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1. Visscher's letters 16.



Among the Roman Christians was included the class of Topasses.<sup>1</sup> Moens notes that a great number of these Topasses were to be found near the forts of the Company. They were proselytes of the Portuguese. "They were so much attached to their religion that nothing would induce them to give it up. Their superstitions out did even those of the Portuguese and the Spaniards." Topasses were the off-springs of Portuguese marrying natives.<sup>1</sup>

There were many Jews in Malabar especially at Cochin. The Chief Jew settlements were at "Cranganore, Parur, Maday and Paluthi." The Jews had always found protection at the hands of the Malabar princes. During the period of Dutch supremacy, the Jews at Cochin were under the leadership of a chief-tain called the 'Mudaliar.' When Cochin was captured by the Dutch, the Jews came under their protection. The Jews had assisted<sup>2</sup> the Dutch when they were carrying on their siege of Cochin.

The Jews had always been persecuted by the Portuguese and that was the main reason that induced them to side with the Dutch in their attempts to capture the fort of Cochin. The Jews in Malabar were distinguished into two classes, white and black

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1. Moen makes the following observations about them :—"On the taking of Cochin there were many Topasses here and along the coast who were the descendants of the Portuguese. Some were slaves who had been given their freedom, others were the off-springs of native women with whom their masters had formed temporary alliances. After the Portuguese left the place they assumed the surnames of their masters. Prior to 1663 they had a Bishop of their own, and a cathedral within the town of Cochin. When the company took the place they came under their protection and were allowed the exercise of their religion. They were placed under a captain and four ensigns as well as other subordinates."

2. Moens observes as follows :—"They furnished the troops of the Dutch company with victuals and all other assistance hoping that they would enjoy under this company the greatest civil and religious liberty. But when our troops were compelled before the end of the good monsoon to leave this coast without having been able to take Cochin, the Portuguese did not fail to make the Jews feel the terrible consequences of their revenge. For no sooner had the Dutch retreated than a detachment of soldiers was sent to the Jewish quarters and pillaged it and set it on fire. The inhabitants then fled to the high-lands and only returned after Cochin was taken by the Dutch."

jeews. The white Jews claim to be the original settlers in Malabar. They were mainly foreign immigrants into Cochin from Europe, Arabia and Persia. The black Jews, larger in number than the white Jews, were mostly natives or of a mixed Jewish-native origin.<sup>1</sup>

The Dutch writers make special mention of the 'Moor' or the Mohomedans in Malabar.<sup>2</sup> The Moors were the chief foes the Portuguese had to encounter in Malabar. The arrival of the Portuguese in Malabar roused the jealousy of the Mohomedans who had the monopoly of trade. The Mohomedans<sup>3</sup> were therefore vigorously attacking the attempts of the Portuguese in establishing domination in Malabar. They were very influential at Calicut and "indeed were almost masters of the place."<sup>4</sup> The Dutch company used to enter into an agreement with the chief Mohamedan chieftain every year for the supply of turmeric.

1. Visscher makes the following observation about the White and Black Jews in Malabar:—"The black and white Jews inhabit the same District, the latter occupying the banks of the river. The white are much richer and more powerful than the black who are mostly of the slave race and amount, I have been told, to 2,000 souls in Malabar. The number of white Jews who have of late come here from Europe, Bagdad and Cairo is small; but there are some also who have been settled here for many centuries. They try as much as possible to prevent inter-marriages with the black Jews, although these sometimes take place." Ref. Visscher's letter No. 18.

2. A very good authority for the origin and early history of the Muslims in Malabar is 'Tufat-Al-Mujahidin' of Shaiykh Zaynud Din, translated from Arabic into English by Lt. M. J. Rowlandson of the Madras Army in 1833 and published for the Oriental Translation Fund of Great Britain; a revised and annotated translation was recently published by the Madras University, the translator being Dr. Mohamed Husayn Nainar.

3. Day makes the following observations about the Malabar Muslims (who are called Mappilas), "At the end of the last century when Malabar was distracted by wars and desolated both by those who called themselves its friends as well as its avowed enemies, the Mappilas were divided into two distinct classes, those residing along the sea coast who were traders or large farmers; and those inland called 'Jungle Mappilas' who lived by rapine, murder and kidnapping children some of whom they sold as slaves to the supper-cargoes of vessels, but to the greater part to the French at 'Mahe and the Dutch in Cochin."

4. Visscher's letters XIX.



The most powerful of the Moors was the Ali Raja of Cannanore with whom the Dutch had entered into many treaties.

Moens observes that there were many "foreign heathens in Malabar" during the Dutch period of hegemony. "They were divided into four classes," he writes—"Pandits Canarians (Konkanies), Baniyas and silver-smiths." There were about 25 Pandits in Malabar according to Moens. They were Tamil or Telugu Brahmins proficient in some branch of Sanskrit learning. They were acting as priests to the other three classes. About the Canarians, Moens makes the following observations:—"They get their living chiefly by trade; for most of them are traders. But there are also many who apply themselves to agriculture. Some of the trading Canarians are prominent wholesale merchants trading with foreign nations, others native traders, others are retailers and supply everything domestic except live stock. For this purpose they have their stalls or little shops underneath the houses in the town, which they rent from the residents. For the use of these stalls they have besides the rent to pay certain taxes annually to the poor house. They keep in stock all kinds of fruits, vegetables, flowers, betel leaves, areca, rice, clothes and Chinese goods and articles which they have exchanged with the Maco<sup>1</sup> traders for other goods or brought from them." The Canarians or Konkanies were under the protection of the Dutch and subject to their jurisdiction. (We have referred to the frequent quarrels between Cochin and the Dutch over the question of this jurisdiction). The Banyas were a trading caste in Malabar, not so numerous as the Konkanies. They were also under the special jurisdiction of the Company. Moens also makes reference to the silversmiths, dyers and shoe makers.

Visscher<sup>2</sup> gives an interesting account about the mode of Government prevalent in Malabar at that time. "The Raja is supreme in those dominions which were subject to him, but not in the free inheritance which belonged to the minor Rajas and Caimals.....They know little of assemblies, councils and parliaments. The Raja chooses his favourites at his pleasure, consulting them in particular cases, but generally being guided

1. Portuguese town in China.

2. Visscher letter No. XI

solely by his own will, unless that will should entirely counter to the customs of the country." No doubt the Rajas were arbitrary in the exercise of their powers. But the arbitrary authority of the Raja was only a later development. The Malabar Rajas originally were mere feudal chieftains depending for their power on the allegiance of their feudal nobles. The nobles held lands on feudal tenure and undertook to support the Rajas with men and money in times of war. It was the arrival of the Europeans that brought about the radical change in the political system of Malabar. The foreign merchants assisted the Rajas by supplying them with arms and ammunition and soldiers trained in new methods of warfare. This strengthened the position of the Rajas as against their feudal nobles whose support they required no more. The Rajas realised that they could carry out their designs with the support of foreigners and launched on a new policy of suppressing the power of their feudal nobility. The foreign merchants helped them in this task as they found that the power of the feudal barons was not conducive to the advancement of their commercial enterprise. In 1723 the English at Anjengo "resolved in spite of money expenses to put down the enemies and subject the country to the King." The foreign merchants "preferred to have on the throne a despotic sovereign unaided by council or clergy who could of his own accord assign them monopolies of the produce they come in quest of and enforce the same with a strong arm." As we have already seen, Marthanda Varma was the first prince of Malabar who struck the fatal blow at the power of the feudal barons. When he organised a powerful standing army and trained the soldiers in novel methods of warfare under the supervision of western generals, the power of the local barons ceased to exist. His policy was successfully followed in other parts of Malabar.

Before this scheme of centralisation of power was carried out, the national assemblies were playing a prominent part in State administration. The system of village republics existed in Malabar from very ancient times. "Socially and politically they exercised considerable influence on the community. They formed centres of local self government. They managed all local affairs, possessed common funds, levied cesses to meet certain local expenses and acted as arbitrators or judges in matters of



dispute arising between persons living within the limits of their local jurisdiction.”<sup>1</sup> The National assemblies form a peculiar feature in the early political organisation of Malabar. They were in existence from pre-historic days and had always acted as a curb on the despotic tendencies of the administrators. The power of these assemblies was so great that the Rajas were bound to consult them for all important matters. Dr. Fryer (17th century) describes the Sates of Malabar as “having a government most like aristocracy of any in the east, each State having a representative and he to act according to the votes of the Nair gentry in full assembly.” But the power of these assemblies had generally declined during Visscher’s time; they were “never held except in cases of emergency.” Visscher notes that there were two kinds of assemblies—one assembling under orders of the Raja and another by the spontaneous will of the people. But the Rajas were doing everything in their power to put down the influence of these assemblies. The arrival of Europeans, the assistance they rendered to the Rajas, the invasion of the Mysoreans—all these resulted in the annihilation of the old feudal system in Malabar and its replacement by a powerful monarchical despotism. The observations of Mr. Murdoch Brown to Dr. Buchanan are worth quoting in this connection. “By this new order of things the Rajas were vested with despotic authority over the other inhabitants, instead of the very limited prerogatives that they had enjoyed by the feudal system under which they would neither extract revenue from the lands of their vassals nor exercise any direct authority in their districts. Thus the ancient constitution of Government was in a great measure destroyed without any other being substituted in its room. The Raja was no longer what he had been, the head of a feudal aristocracy with limited authority, but the all powerful deputy of a despotic prince, whose military force was always at his command to curb or chastise any of the chieftains who were inclined to dispute or disobey his mandates.”<sup>2</sup>

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1. History of Kerala by K. P. P. Menon, Vol. I, P. 259.

2. Canara & Malabar by Dr. Clandius Buchanan, Vol. II—P. 190.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE SYSTEM OF ADMINISTRATION IN MALABAR IN THE DUTCH PERIOD

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WE have described in the previous chapter the political conditions in Malabar in the 17th and 18th centuries and referred to the growth of royal absolutism. But royal absolutism did not mean the unrestrained tyranny of the Rajas. Writing about the middle of the 18th century, Gollennesse observes, "One point must be noticed here which is of great importance in the company's service, viz., although the kings and princes exercise great authority over their subjects, affairs are so regulated by the laws of Cheraman Perumal that their rule can in no way be called despotic. Subjects obey their king ungrudgingly as long as he remains within the limits of the law." Gollennesse notes that the people implicitly obeyed the Raja only when he was within the limits of the laws. But if the Rajas were to issue orders calculated to injure the interests of the whole community, they would not be obeyed. A similar observation has been made by Van Rheede<sup>1</sup> in his memorandum. He says "Subjects are not bound to observe any orders, commands or whims and council decisions of the king which are not in conformity with their laws welfare or privileges, and have not been approved in their own district and ratified at the meeting of their district assemblies." Van Rheede again notes: "No King of Malabar has the power to make contracts which are prejudicial to the interests of the land lords, noblemen or Nairs, such a king would run the danger of being expelled and rejected by his subjects." When we examine the early treaties between the Dutch company and the Rajas, we invariably notice that these treaties have been concluded with the consent of the chief nobles. We find in these agreements clauses which definitely assert the consent and co-operation of the nobles.<sup>2</sup> Martin Huisman says that "the kings had indeed the power to make certain treaties

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1. Memorandum of Hendrick Van Rheede, Para (11).

2. Refer to the treaties between the Cochin Raja and the Dutch in 1674, 1679, 1682, etc.



which might in some measure extend the jurisdiction of trade by sea but they could not do so against private rights."

People used to assert their rights not only in cases of contracts and treaties, but in matters of taxation also. A notable instance of this kind may be seen in the resolutions passed by the 'nattars' of Nanjanadu protesting against the illegal impositions of the Travancore Raja. A resolution passed by the Nattars in December 1713 says "...Hereafter we should in accordance with the Royal commands of our sovereign Kulasekharaperumal continue to pay 'Anjili' and 'Melvaram' alone, but not any 'Kottappanam' and unusual taxes and should protest against such attempts by unitedly making a bold stand and (if necessary) by emigrating. We should honourably keep up all the privileges or rights which our ancestors enjoyed in old days.....In thus asserting our rights if any Pidagai or village or any single individual is subjected to loss by acts of Government, we should support them by re-imbursing such loss from our common funds. If at such times any one should get into the secrets of Government and impair the privileges or rights of the country, he should be subjected to public inquiry by the "Nattars."<sup>1</sup> Flight to the mountains abandoning cultivation seems to have been the retaliating step taken up by the people against excessive taxes. A resolution passed in a meeting of ryots at Nanjanad dated 16th Karkatakam 898 M. E. (1722) says "On account of the heavy taxes imposed on us and the cruel treatment we were subjected to till the Kumbhom harvest of 895 M. E., we were forced to leave our fields uncultivated during the whole of the year 896 and retreat to the mountains." The following resolutions passed by the ryots of Nanjanad will prove their great zeal for popular rights:—"We will be prepared to make a bold stand and resist by force if any meanness be taken to enforce the unjust imports and even be willing to migrate into another country, leaving our Kumbhom crop behind." "If anybody were to betray the proceedings of this assembly being bribed by the Government Officers or consent to pay the unjust

1. Quoted by Nagam Aiyya from the edicts found among the records of the Periaivittu Mudaliar.

taxes he shall be liable to pay with his person and property the penalty for such gross treachery." "If any person from Nanjanad north and south serve as an accountant under the Government or betray our affairs, he shall pay the penalty by forfeiting his property." The ryots of Nanjanad concluded their resolutions by swearing by their deities "Thammalaya Perumal and Bhoothalingam" that they would preserve the rights of their assemblies.

The spirit and enthusiasm shown by the ryots of Nanjanad were characteristic of the people of Malabar in the 17th century and the early half of the 18th century. We have already described the circumstances by which popular rights had to give place to royal authority.

The system of administration in the countries of Malabar was essentially of an orthodox Hindu pattern. According to the traditions of Malabar, the country was originally entrusted by Parasurama to the Brahmin Namboodiries. They followed the typical traditions of the Hindu polity.

The joint family was the unit of the social system. A number of joint families constituted a village. Villages were administered by autonomous republics or village assemblies.

The country was divided into Nadus which were sub-divided into Desams. The village headman was known as Desa Vzshi or Madambi. The Desa Vzshi was in charge of the administration of the village temple and its properties. He had the general superintendence of all the affairs of the Desam or village. Sometimes two or three villages were under the jurisdiction of one Desa Vazhi. He assisted the Government in the collection of revenues and other dues. He had to supply a fixed quota of soldiers to the king in times of war. He exercised certain police and judicial authority in the village with the help of the 'Pramanis' or leading citizens. The 'Pramanis' had no hereditary rights. "Any respectable man in the village who was considered as more intelligent than his neighbours and who was on that account resorted to by the inhabitants for the adjustments of their little differences gradually acquired among them the title of Pramani." If a village had no Pramanis to settle

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1. K. P. P. Menon. History of Kerala. Vol. II. P. 378.



disputes, the inhabitants used to carry their complaints to the Pramanis of the neighbouring village. The Desa Vazhis and Pramanis were paid by the litigants for the settlement of their disputes. The Desa Vazhi had other sources of income. He was entitled to the produce of one plantain tree and one cocoanut tree from every landlord besides contribution for ghee, sugar, etc.

The Nadu Vazhi was an officer superior to the Desa Vazhi. He was the chief of a Nadu or district and exercised jurisdiction over all the villages in his Nadu. He had a share in the royal revenue besides numerous other sources of income. He was the chief police, judicial and military officer of the district.

The Nadu Vazhi was subject to the jurisdiction of the Raja to whom he supplied soldiers in times of war. The Rajas were assisted by their prime ministers in all matters of administration. Prime Ministers in Cochin and Calicut were hereditary officers; the Paliath Achens were the hereditary prime ministers of Cochin while Mangat Achens were the hereditary prime ministers of Calicut. In Travancore, however, the office was not hereditary.

Concerning the administrative system of Calicut, Buchanan says that the business of the State was conducted by the Zamorin, with the help of four hereditary officers called 'Sarvadhikariakars.' They were (1) Mangat Achen (2) Tinancherry Ellayatu (3) Dharmothu Panikker (4) Paranambi. There were inferior Kariakars appointed by the king for the collection of revenues and customs. The defence of the country rested entirely on such of the Nairs as received arms from the Zamorin. In cases of emergency certain tributary chiefs were summoned to supply the king with soldiers.

Mangat Achen, the Zamorin's hereditary prime minister, had his original seat at Chattodathu Idom in Vattoli where he enjoyed the title of 'Valunnavar' under the Rajas of Kottayam. His services were permanently transferred to the Zamorin by one of the Rajas of Kottayam.

Dharmoth Panikker or Tamme Panikker was the commander-in-chief of the Zamorin's army. He was in charge of the Zamorin's kalari where instructions in warfare were given to Nair youths. Tinayancherry Elayadu and Paranampi were Brahmin ministers of the Zamorin. "A distinction was observed

between the ministers and the Nadu Vazhis, though both held their offices by hereditary right. While the ministers like the Nadu Vazhis had to obtain the recognition of the Zamorin in the form of a writ or sannad before they could succeed to their predecessor's place, in theory their appointments ceased with the death of the Zamorin, as being attached to his person, and therefore had to be renewed at the Ariyittu Vazcha by his successor."

The administrative system of Travancore was different from that of Cochin or Calicut. The Raja appointed his Dewan or Dalawa and there was no hereditary rule of succession. Social distinctions or rank were never the qualification for the appointment of the Dalawas in Travancore. The greatest ministers of Travancore—Rama Iyen and Kesava Pillai—were persons who rose from low official ranks to high positions of eminence by virtue of their conspicuous abilities. The following accounts abouts the administrative system of Travancore are taken from the Report of Lieutenant Arthur.<sup>1</sup> "Under the Dalawa or Dewan there is a chain of officers all dependant on each other in regular gradation for the management of the revenue and all other affairs of Government; thus the whole country is parcelled out into a certain number of grand divisions over each of which a principal officer termed Valia Sarvadhikariakar presides and his authority extends to all matters of a revenue, commercial and judicial nature. These great portions of the country are again divided into a certain number of parts each under the secondary controlling management of a Sarvadhikariakar and these again are subdivided into districts under the management of a kariakar who has a residency in certain principal places in his district. Other officers termed Proverthicar are the last in gradation among the managing officers of respectability, but under them again there are several inferior officers called Chandrakars, Toracars and Villakkars or peons who have each a distinct and separate office. Besides the above there is an officer appointed in each of the three great divisions who is entitled the Melu Vicharippuker and the nature of his office is partly judicial."

Visscher's letters contain descriptive details about the administrative system of Cochin. "The Raja chooses his

1. Lt. Arthur's Report—Selections from the Records of Tra P. 16.



favourites at his pleasure, consulting them in particular cases, but generally being guided solely by his own will, unless that will should run entirely counter to the customs of the country. Many keep near them a Brahmin to instruct them in the fundamental and long established laws and customs."<sup>1</sup> The Raja appointed royal guards to safeguard his possessions. "These guards were bound to defend such places at risk of their lives and to attack the assailants for whose death they were not held responsible."

The administrative system in Cochin was essentially different from that of the other countries, as the Raja had placed himself by treaty obligations under the protection of the Dutch Company. Even though the Dutch did not directly interfere in internal administration, the Raja used to take their advice in all important matters. The administration of Cochin was carried out by a body of ministers consisting of Paliath Achen, Thalachenor, Manakkotta Achen and a captain appointed by the Dutch Company.<sup>2</sup> Paliath Achen was the hereditary prime minister and commander-in-chief of Cochin. The ministers, however, had no jurisdiction over the foreigners and the Christians who were under the special protection of the Company. Besides these ministers, there were other administrative officers like Sarvadhikariakar, Kariakar, Menon, Mudalpidi, Niyogaganmar, etc. The Dutch and the Raja jointly exercised the right of removing these officers in all cases of misconduct.<sup>3</sup> The heir-apparent was strictly forbidden to interfere in the administration.

#### REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

Visscheer<sup>4</sup> gives the following account concerning the revenue administration in Malabar in general and Cochin in particular:— "The Malabar States in common with all others in the world possess certain fixed revenues and funds for replenishing the treasury and maintaining royal form and the welfare of the State, though here the Raja's incomes are not very large or out of the common. Their chief profits are derived from their private estates and the inferior princes are often richer than the reigning

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1. Visscher's letters No. XI.
  2. Refer treaties of 1674 and 1682.
  3. Refer to the treaty of 1684.
  4. Visschers letter No. XI.

sovereign being possessed of larger free and hereditary properties." Commerce was a source of great income to the Rajas, especially to those who had forts in their possession. In Cochin, a ten per cent duty was levied on all goods imported into the kingdom and six per cent on all exports. All goods imported by the Dutch Company were free from duties. The Dutch had also a share of the duties imposed on goods brought into Cochin, the ratio with Cochin being 4 : 6. Visscher<sup>1</sup> mentions many other sources of revenue for the Cochin Raja. All merchandise conveyed by inland navigation pay a Jenmakara or toll of one per cent to the Raja. The Raja is entitled to the duties on Tobacco. All gardens situated in Karappuram pay a tenth of their fruits to the Raja. On all debts discharged under sentence from the Raja he receives twenty per cent. Mothers present an off-spring on the birth of their children. He is the inheritor of the property of all, who die without heirs and sometimes when there are blood relations living. He receives an acknowledgment in money for every office or dignity he confers. Apart from this he is entitled to certain customary presents from his subjects. If he sent his guards to the assistance of any one, he could expect a valuable present in return. The punishment for criminal offences was often in the form of heavy fines which also formed a source of income for the Raja. Also, the Raja received a fee for the execution of all legal documents.

The following were some of the important sources of income for the Rajas of Malabar.<sup>2</sup>

- (1) 'Amkam'—or battle wager.
- (2) 'Chumkam'—or customs duties. The Rajas levied customs duties on imports and exports and also on transports both by land and sea.
- (3) 'Ezha'—It was often in the form of a fine or penalty.
- (4) 'Kozha'—This was a forcible contribution in cases of emergency.
- (5) 'Tappu'—It was a fine imposed by the Raja upon those who were convicted of unintentional offences.

1. Visschers' letter No. XI.

2. Manual of the Malabar District. Appendix XIII. Also, History of Kerala. Vol. II, P. 324—336



(6) 'Pizha'—It was a fine imposed on criminals according to the magnitude of the crime and the circumstances of the criminal. It sometimes extended to the total confiscation of property.

(7) 'Purushāntaram' or succession duty. Whenever an heir succeeded to an eminent position as Nadu Vazhi, Desa Vazhi or land lord, he was expected to pay a stipulated amount as revenue to the Raja.

(8) 'Pulayāthu Pennu'—The Raja had the right to dispose of the women who were convicted of offences like adultery. The Rajas used to exact large amounts of money from their families for their protection. He could also sell them to whomsoever he pleased.

(9) 'Kazhcha'—It consisted of presents made by the people to the Raja on ceremonial occasions.

(10) 'Dathu Kazhcha'—It was a fee imposed on persons who wanted legal sanction to make adoptions.

(11) 'Ponnarippu'—This was the share given to the Raja for the sifting of gold.

(12) 'Attatakkam'—or escheat.

(13) 'Atimappanam'—It was the yearly payment made by the Raja's slaves.

(14) 'Chērikkal'—These were the Raja's private dominions acquired by lapse or escheat.

(15) 'Aimula'—Cows with five dugs belonged to the Raja.

(16) 'Kumula'—Cows with three dugs belonged to the Raja.

(17) 'Cehnkompū'—Cattle that were employed for bull fights, etc., were the Raja's property.

(18) 'Pūvālu'—Cattle with a marked tail.

(19) 'Kannata Pully'—Beeves born with a peculiar white spot near the eye.

(20) 'Anapiti'—Wild elephants caught from jungles.

(21) 'Utanja Urukka'—This meant ship-wrecked vessels.

(22) 'Kinattil Panni'—Wild animals that had fallen into wells or pits.

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| (23) 'Kompu'  | } These were the presents to be made to the Raja after all hunting expeditions. |
| (24) 'Kuravu' |   |
| (25) 'Valu'   |   |
| (26) 'Tolu'   |   |

(27) 'Talappanam'—Poll tax levied on certain occasions from poor classes.

(28) All precious metals or stones.

(29) Cardamoms, teack, jack and blackwood trees, ebony, bamboos, honey and wax.

(30) 'Valappanam'—a tax paid by fishermen.

(31) 'Changatam'—It was the fee paid by a person for enjoying the special protection by the king's guards.

(32) 'Raksha Bhogam'—Protection money.

Apart from these sources of income the Raja was entitled to land tax also equal to about one fifth of the produce of the land. Whether or not the Malabar Rajas exacted a land tax in addition to the numerous other revenues, is a question of dispute. It appears there was no land tax in Malabar before the Mysorean invasions. Justice Kunhi Raman Nair<sup>1</sup> observes:—"Land taxes were unknown in Keralam in ancient days. The ruler derived his income from other sources than land tax. The Rajas and Perumals also do not appear to have exacted regular land tax until a period when necessity for warlike preparations ceased, though when powerful enough, they levied forced contributions from land holders in case of emergency." Buchanan<sup>2</sup> says "Under the Government of the Rajas there was no land tax but the conqueror (Hyder) soon found the necessity of imposing one as the expenses of his military establishment greatly exceeded the usual revenues." Most authors agree that the land tax was introduced by Hyder for the first time in Malabar. Even though Visscher noticed that there were certain estates in Malabar whose owners were obliged to pay an annual tribute to the Raja, he makes special mention of the fact that it was regarded as a free-will offering rather than a tax.

1. Memorandum on the land tenures of Travancore by Justice Kunhi Raman Nair. (Quoted in the History of Kerala, Vol. II. P. 341.)

2. Buchanan—Canara & Malabar P. 65.



## JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

Visscher<sup>1</sup> gives the following account about the administration of justice in Malabar. "Their legal suits are tried according to old customs *viva voce*. No lengthy proceedings are required to obtain the decision of the causes which are concluded within a few days by the fiat of the Raja who in obscure cases consults with his Brahmins."

The warrant of a magistrate was not necessary for laying the property of a person in arrest. Any private individual could do it. The Raja listened to all important cases in his country in return for which he received a fee from the litigants. All dubious cases, where no positive proofs could be found, were decided by solemn oaths by both parties before the temple deity. There was also the system of trial by ordeal. There were ordeals<sup>2</sup> like boiling oil, poisonous snakes, crocodiles, etc. Trials by ordeal were generally resorted to in heinous criminal cases, like murder and adultery. It is evident that there were no written laws in the country having a universal application. Van Rheede noted that the people were not bound to obey the orders of the king if they were beyond the limits of "law." By this law, he only meant the customs and traditions of the country. Logan says "If it were necessary to sum up in one word the law of the country as it stood before the Mahomedan invasion and British occupation, that word would undoubtedly be the word 'Custom.' In Malayalam it would be 'maryāda' 'Mārgam' and 'Acharam' all signifying established rule and custom and all of them Sanskrit words."<sup>3</sup>

The Raja was the highest authority in the administration of justice. He listened to original cases as well as appeals from *Desa Vazhis* and *Nadu Vazhis*. The village republics had their own system of dispensing justice. We have referred to the part played by *Pramanis* in Villages who settled minor disputes on

1. Visscher's letter No. X.

2. The existence of the system of ordeals in ancient Malabar is attested to by the writings of Fra Batolomeo, (Ref: voyage to the East-Indies) Walter Hamilton (Re: Hindustan) Barbosa (Description of the coasts of Africa and Malabar in the 16th cent.) Grose (voyage to East-Indies). There is evidence to prove that the system was prevalent even in second half of the 19th cent.

3. Manual of the Malabar District P, P. 110—111.

caste, religion and public morality. The Pramanis had no written rules of procedure, but they followed the conventions and traditions of the village. They sought the help of learned Brahmins for complicated cases. The decisions of the Pramanis and Karnavars were generally accepted by the litigants without any murmur. Repudiating the authority of the Karnavars was considered a grave offence against society, and it could even lead to social ostracism. For the settlement of civil disputes, there was a special civil tribunal consisting of the elders of the village. The Nadu Vazhi was the chief judge in his district. He also could get the assistance of learned Brahmins in the settlement of cases. The kings used to appoint judicial officers for hearing important cases. It was the sovereign's duty to uphold the 'Dharma' and preserve the 'Maryāda' of his country.

In Calicut there was an officer called 'Thalachennavar' to administer justice. There seem to have been special courts for Hindus, Mohamedans, Jews and Christians. The method followed for realising debts was very simple. A creditor could effect an arrest on the debtor by a very simple procedure. The token of this embargo or arrest was the leaf of a cashew nut or other tree which was tied on the article thus arrested; if it was land it was stuck upon a stick, the party exercising this privilege announcing 'this is the 'Rama' or the arrest of the Raja.' The 'Rama' was the sacred symbol of justice recognised by the people. Hamilton also refers to this method of realising debts. He says "They have a good way of arresting people for debt, viz., there is a proper person and with a small stick from the judge who is generally a Brahmin, and when that person finds the debtor he draws a circle around him with a stick and charges him in the king and judge's name, not to stir out of it till the creditor is satisfied either by payment or surety and it is no less than death to the debtor to break prison by going out of the circle." This simple method of issuing an interdict to the debtor's person or property was widely followed in all parts of Malabar.<sup>1</sup>

1. "A tuft of three green twigs tied to a doorway precluded persons from crossing the threshold of a house and a similar tuft tied to the end of a staff stuck in the ground was, and still is, in some parts a sign that there is an interdict on the crops there growing."



The institution of slavery was prevalent in Malabar from very ancient times. There was a special class of slaves called 'Pulayās' who were confined to the task of tilling the soil for their lords. The land lords were bound to feed their slaves throughout the year. As the slaves<sup>1</sup> were employed in the estates of their masters all through the year, the wages they received were sufficient for their maintenance. Wages were often in kind. By the ancient laws of Malabar the lord was the sole owner of the slave, answerable to nobody for the slave's life. He could inflict punishment on his slave which might even extend to death. Slaves could be sold by their masters at their pleasure. The Dutch used to buy slaves in large numbers. This system of selling slaves was abolished when the English took charge of the administration of Malabar. Articles (3) of the Dutch terms of capitulation at Cochin demanded that "the Dutch officers and soldiers should be allowed to take with them all their effects without their being liable to any search, their servants and slaves whilst those that are married would likewise be at liberty to take their families with them." To this the English replied that 'slave' was a name unknown in the British dominions. After the surrender of Cochin, the English Government wrote to the Dutch requesting them to abolish the practice of buying children as slaves. But they declined saying that they realised large sums of money by it. Day says that when Cochin was taken almost every servant in the place was found to be a slave.

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1 The institution of slavery is attributed to Parasu Rama who is said to have organised a separate caste of slaves for tilling the soil. The historical explanation of this slave caste is that they were the original inhabitants of the country who were conquered and subdued by the northern invaders. There were three classes of slaves (1) by birth (2) by punishment (3) by purchase. The Pulaya, Paraya, Veta and other such tribes are condemned to be slave by birth. People accused of crimes against caste and society were condemned to be slaves. There was regular trade in slaves and many slaves were carried away by the European merchants, to be employed as workmen in their estates. Day observes "Report says that the Church (in Cochin) was occupied as a slave godown on special emergencies and that in the week day, when the sacred edifice was not required for religious purposes, it was employed to keep those unfortunate creatures in, who had usually been carried off by the Moplas and sold to the Dutch who shipped them to Ceylon, Batavia, the Cape and other places."

Day. Land of the Perumals. P. P. 183-84.

It is worth noting in this connection that the 'Pulaya' system of slavery continues in many parts of Malabar even to-day. Of course, notable changes have come about in the relationship between the master and the slave. Still in many backward parts of Malabar the 'Pulaya' is confined to the tilling of his master's soil. The Pulayas live in the lands of their masters who exercise over them some sort of a proprietary right. Formerly social degradation was a penalty imposed by judicial tribunals for civil and criminal offences. This practice, of course, prevails no longer. But the Pulaya system of slavery still continues as a relic of the past.

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## CHAPTER XIII

### THE DUTCH POSSESSIONS IN MALABAR.

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**M**ALABAR was only one among the many possessions the Dutch had in the East. The Dutch were concentrating their attentions mainly on the Spice Islands which were the main sources of their income and centres of their trade. To the Dutch Government at home Malabar was comparatively an insignificant acquisition. From the list of the numerous Dutch possessions given below, we will get an idea as to the insignificant status of Malabar as a trade settlement :—

- (1) Moluccas, under a Governor.
- (2) Amboina and 10 other islands, under a Governor.
- (3) Banda and 9 other islands, under a Governor.
- (4) Macassar, under a Governor.
- (5) Solar and Timor, under a chief.
- (6) Malacca with various subordinate factories in the Malay Peninsula and on the East Coast of Sumatra, under a Governor.
- (7) West Coast of Sumatra, under a Chief.
- (8) Jambi, under a Chief.
- (9) Palembang, under a Chief.



- (10) *Malabar, under a Commander.*
- (11) *Surat, under a Director.*
- (12) *Mocha, under a Chief,*
- (13) *Persia (Gombroon), under a Director.*
- (14) *Ceylon, under a Governor, with subordinate Commanders at Jaffna and Galle.*
- (15) *Japan (Island Desima off Nagasaki); under a Chief.*
- (16) *Coromandel, under a Governor.*
- (17) *Bengal, under a Director.*
- (18) *Batavia, under a Governor General.*
- (19) *Samarang or North east Coast of Java, under a Commander.*
- (20) *Bantam (Java), under a Chief.*
- (21) *Cheribon (Java), under a Chief.*
- (22) *Cape of Good hope, under a Governor.*

This list consisting of about 22 important trade settlements shows the Company's possessions in 1725. In the territories under a Governor or Commander the Dutch were maintaining forts and garrisons. They had also certain sovereign rights in these territories. But in those under a Chief or Director, the Dutch had only commercial interests and rights. In Malabar as we have seen already, the Dutch had many important forts and certain sovereign rights.

The possessions of the Company on the Malabar Coast, consisted of "forts, the buildings within them and lands either taken from the Portuguese or conquered since." The most important fortresses of the Dutch in Malabar were Quilon, Kayamkulam, Porakkad, Cranganore, Palliport, Chettwaye and Cochin. The Dutch had a fortress at Cannanore and also a small settlement at Calicut.

Speaking about Quilon, Gollennesse observes:—"This State is small and produces nothing of importance except a little pepper; and although considerable consignments of this grain are some times supplied, most of it is imported from Peritally and other places. The fortress of the Hon'ble Company likewise

called Quilon lies within the lines of the Signatty which were so manfully defended last year by the brave Nairs, under the gallant old Rajadore Achuda Barrier against the entire forces of the Raja of Travancore that the latter had to raise the siege with great loss and shame. The residential town of the king is also within these lines and the Travancore works lie within a stone throw and could be bombarded from fort Quilon."<sup>1</sup>

Captain Neuhoff was the Chief Director of Dutch East India Company at Quilon. The Dutch had occupied Quilon even before they had established their Government at Cochin. They remained in possession of the fort for nearly a century. Nieuhoff's accounts about Quilon are interesting. "The city is fortified with a stone wall of 18-20 feet high and 8 bastions; its suburbs which are very large and stately are by the Portuguese called Colang China. . . . . The harbour is very convenient for small vessels but not for great ones because the south wind blows directly upon the shore and forces the waves with great violence thither." Even though Quilon was not very strong, it provided ample facilities for defence. The inhabitants of the Dutch settlement at Quilon were mostly Christians. Van Anglebeck says that Christians in Quilon had been the subjects of the Company from 1663 onwards and that they were governed without the least interference of the Raja of Travancore. But there seems to have been some dispute between the Travancore Raja and the Dutch over the rights claimed by the former to collect taxes from the fishermen. The dispute was settled in 1788 by the Peace Conference at Mavelikara. The Dutch agreed that they would collect the tax from the fishermen and remit it to the

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1. Visscher describes the usefulness of the Quilon fort as follows:— (Ref Visscher's Letter No. IV.) "This fort is of use in investing the power of the Rajas of Travancore and of Signatti in whose dominions it is situated and as an outpost against foreigners especially the English, whose fort at Anjengo is at no great distance. The fortress of Quilon commands the bay of the same name; tolls are levied from the native traders and licences issued to them. It possesses little territory inland besides the plain. On the sea side the boundary is marked by a gate with four stone pillars. There are certain stations in this province such as Tengapatnam in the south near Cape Comorin which serve principally as places of despatch of letters, and for cutting mill-stones and other stones used in the service of the East India Company. A good deal of linen is also woven here though the trade belongs to Tutacorin."



Raja's treasury. In turn the Raja promised not to interfere in the affairs of Dutch Quilon. After the surrender of the Cochin fort its dependencies also passed into the hands of the English. The Dutch fortress of Quilon (Tangacherry) became a part of the British Dominions by the Paris Convention of 1841.

Kayamkulam was the first of the factories which the Dutch had acquired in Malabar. But the Raja of Kayamkulam allowed the Dutch only certain trade privileges. He refused to comply with their request for building a fort there. Kayamkulam had a good bazaar or market place where all kinds of wares were sold. The Company had a factory in the interior. At the mouth of the river they had a "preventive station."

The Dutch had an important factory at Porakkad. The Company received about 400,000 lbs. of pepper from Porakkad. Porakkad produced large quantities of rice also.

The Dutch fort at Cranganore<sup>1</sup> was small but strong. The fort served as an outpost against the Raja of Cranganore and still more against the Raja of Porakkad. "It was also of use as a preventive station and against the smuggling trade and the transit of prohibited goods as well as in levying certain tolls for the East India Company." The Raja's strength at Cranganore was comparatively insignificant and as such the Company had great influence there. Moens writing about the usefulness of the Cranganore fort says that it was the fort that checked the progress of Hyder Ali. "If this small fortress had not been there, and the hook of Ayakotta had not been fortified—since they are the only two places outside the lines of defence of Travancore where a passage is possible—the Nawab would have broken through for good; and the utility of this little fort was clearly proved." The Dutch had always asserted sovereign

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1 Nienhoff gives the following description about Cranganore:—"It was very famous among the Indians by reason of its antiquity; being situated upon the bank of a river about a league from the sea shore defended by a wall of earth and a stone breakwork; which had seven bastions and the wall of earth three more. At the point near the river is remaining to this day a strong stone tower for the defence of the river which served instead of a bulwark on that side. On the other point was a small fort which commanded the river and all ships going out or in."

2 Visscher letter No. IV.

authority over Cranganore. Cranganore never seems to have been an independent country. Formerly it was an appendage of the Zamorin. Later, by the treaty of 1717 between the Dutch and the Zamorin, Cranganore was placed under the jurisdiction of the Company. The Rajas of Cranganore had traditional marriage relationship with the Zamorin's family. We find the Dutch Governor, rebuking the Raja of Cranganore for giving protection to the Zamorin and his family who were driven out of the country by Hyder. The Dutch Governor asserted that "according to a lawful contract between him and the Hon'ble Company all the land from Chettwaye to Cranganore was under the ownership of the Company and also that His Highness and his whole country were under the protection of the Company; that therefore his request to send away the Zamorin's family and followers was not unreasonable." The Dutch Governor warned the Raja that he must thereafter abide implicitly by the "good advice" given by the Company.

The Dutch had from the very beginning considered their fort of Cranganore an expensive one. As early as 1680 they had decided to reduce, if not to destroy, their forts at Cranganore and Quilon. They had even offered to sell it to the Portuguese from whom they had conquered it. In 1697 they reduced their garrison at Cranganore to a small force of twenty Europeans. In 1767 the Batavian Government issued strict orders to the Cochin Governor Breekport to destroy the fortress. But, he refrained from doing so as there was threat of a Mysorean invasion. We have already described the Mysorean invasion of Cranganore and the subsequent prospects of the fort there. In August 1789 the Dutch sold the fort to the Travancore Raja.

The Dutch had a small fort at Palliport. It was situated on the island of Vypeen between Ayakotta and Cochin. The Dutch had captured the fort from the Portuguese. But they sold it along with Cranganore to Travancore.

The fort at Chettwaye was a fairly important one. Visscher speaks of it as the strongest fortress in Malabar in his time. It served partly to protect their commerce and partly as a defence against the Zamorin. The Dutch had surrendered this fortress to the Zamorin in 1691, but ever since it had been a bone of



contention between the Dutch and the Zamorin. Finally after a severe war in 1717 the Dutch regained their possession at Chettwaye.

The Dutch fortress at Cannanore was captured from the Portuguese immediately after the conquest of Cochin. The Portuguese Commander at Cannanore surrendered the fort to the Dutch without offering any resistance in February 1663. The Portuguese used to assert their claim on Cannanore on the ground that the Dutch had gained possession of it after the signing of the treaty between Portugal and Holland in Europe. The treaty was signed on the 6th of August 1661. But it was brought into force only on the 14th of March 1663. On that ground the Dutch refused to surrender the fort to the Portuguese. The Dutch were on friendly terms with the Ali Raja of Cannanore. According to the instructions of the home Government, the Cannanore fortress was ceded to the Ali Raja in 1771.

Cochin was the strongest fortress the Dutch had in Malabar. It was a town of considerable importance even before it came into the hands of the Dutch. The Portuguese had a sufficiently strong fortress there, but the Dutch reduced its size considerably. Visscher notes that the fortifications in Cochin were sufficient to protect the town against the natives, who were ignorant of the science of besieging and the methods of bombarding. But they were not strong enough to resist a large European force.<sup>1</sup> Moens in his memoirs gives instructions to his successors to keep the fort always in repairs. It was Moens who was mainly responsible for the repairing of the Dutch fortifications at Cochin. In the time of his predecessors the fort had been in a very ruinous

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1. Visscher gives the following description about the town:—"The circumference of the town is tolerably extensive. It would take a man a good half hour walk round the walls. But the space enclosed by them contains several unoccupied portions. The streets are regular enough but the houses are quaint and built after the old Portuguese fashion.... The town of Cochin is inhabited by Christians for the heathens are not allowed by their own laws to dwell in it. The inhabitants comprise however different classes. There are the native Christians, the Topasses and the Europeans; the last who form the most considerable portion of them comprising also the mixed race sprung from European fathers and native mothers.... There is a very commodious roadstead in which several ships from all parts of the world annually cast anchor."

condition. Speaking about the defences of the fort, Stavorinus<sup>1</sup> observes, "Although it cannot be said that the greatest part of these fortifications are constructed according to the exact rules of art, yet the place is sufficiently fortified to withstand a *coup-de-main*, and it would require a regular siege to take it. Approches cannot even be made from any other quarter than from the south, where there is a dry and level plain; for to the eastward as well as to the river there are several morasses which would render an attack on that side extremely difficult, besides the place is fortified the strongest on that side and is weakest by the sea side."

Apart from the fortresses we have described above, the Dutch had many costly buildings and landed properties. In the time of Moens the buildings of the Company were all in fairly good condition. He was mainly responsible for the renovation of many buildings. The important buildings at Cochin were the Government House and the Church. When the Dutch captured Cochin from the Portuguese, they found there many religious establishments. There were monasteries of the order of St. Paul and St. Augustine. The Jesuits too had their establishments within the walls of the town. The Dutch however did not devote much of their attention to construct buildings or monuments. The Dutch had residencies in almost all their settlements. The Dutch Residency at Thengappattanam, says Gollennesse, was a small mud building worth nothing which had been broken down by the enemy. They had a Residency at Ponnani made of mud which was also in ruins. Gollennesse speaks of the necessity of re-thatching it every year. The Dutch Governor wanted to tile the building, but the Zamorin had never consented to this proposal thinking that it would mean a permanent establishment of Dutch influence in his country. The Dutch had 'Lodges' at Kayamkulam and Porakkad. They were unfortified factories or ware-houses, mostly thatched buildings of mud. The Dutch Governor at Cochin had no authority to erect wooden buildings without the consent of the Batavian Government. Gollennesse gives the following instruction to his successor:—"Of repairs which require undertaking you will find plenty every where with so many fortifications, lodges and buildings. Still in my opinion

1. (Stavorinus, Dutch Admiral 1775-1778.)



twenty four carpenters and ten brick layers will be sufficient in future in the town here. This number can always be increased if necessary from among Topass workmen, who may be had here in large number for one schelling a day.....Yachts, sloops and smaller vessels for the use of this commandery and for other settlements are constructed here firm and strong."

The Dutch had extensive landed properties in Malabar. But they were scattered in different places both in Travancore and in cochin. This was a cause of frequent friction between the Company and the Rajas. Near their fortress at Cranganore, the Dutch had many fields and gardens which they used to lease out to the natives. They also possessed the islands of Muthukunnoo in the neighbourhood of Cranganore. In an appendix to the memoirs of Moens we find an exhaustive list of all the landed properties they had. The Dutch had on the whole nine islands and sixty nine gardens and lands. In their landed properties they had 42,089 fruit bearing cocoanut and other trees. They had about 4,500 paras of cultivated land and 19,716 salt pans. The Dutch Governor earnestly wished that he could possess one "fine bit of land" in the same place instead of having landed properties scattered in different parts. Moens' suggestion was to exchange the Dutch properties in the Travancore territory with Raja of Travancore for his territories which lay bordering on the Dutch possessions. But he knew perfectly well that the Travancore Raja would not part with 'even a span of his territory.' Therefore he was thinking of selling them to Travancore for a sum proportional to the annual revenue they had from them.

The military establishments of the Dutch in Malabar were rather too costly for them. The Dutch realised pretty well that their commercial interests should be backed up by military power. But they had always shown a reluctance in having elaborate military establishments in Malabar. After the capture of Cochin the Dutch authorities were seriously considering whether they should retain all the fortifications of the Portuguese. It was decided on the 24th January 1663 that a large part of the town should be pulled down and the fortifications should be reduced to such an extent that it could be managed by a small garrison. Accordingly the Dutch destroyed many houses and public buildings at Cochin. But fortifications were highly indispensable

in Malabar so long as the Dutch did not have any settled Government there. Therefore they decided to keep a small garrison at Cochin and Quilon, Chettwaye, Cranganore and Cannanore. The Batavian Government decided that in times of peace Cochin should have only 300 soldiers, Quilon 99, Chettwaye 144, Cranganore 56 and Cannanore 79. But these garrisons were hardly sufficient for even defensive purposes. Therefore we find the Dutch authorities at Cochin frequently writing to Ceylon and Batavia for reinforcements. In their campaign of 1740 the Dutch received reinforcements from Ceylon to the extent of 158 Europeans and 191 Malayas. In 1741 the whole Dutch garrison consisted of only 350 Europeans and 400 Malayas. This was too weak for defence against Travancore. Therefore the Dutch wrote to Ceylon for a reinforcement of 200 Europeans and 200 Malayas. But the Ceylon Government was not in a position at that time to spare any soldiers. The Dutch were planning for enlisting some 1,000 men from the Pandyan country. The Dutch Government at Cochin asked for 2,000 soldiers from Batavia in order to wage the Travancore war. If the Zamorin was also to attack them they wanted some 3000 more. These frequent demands for large numbers of soldiers from Ceylon and Batavia show how weak their military position was. Moens the ablest of the Dutch Governors at Cochin, had pointed out to the Batavian Government on many occasions the dangers of having no strong garrisons in Malabar. He was of opinion that Hyder would not have dared an invasion of their possessions if they had a strong military force in Malabar. Moens was trying to keep up the prestige of the company among the native princes by dexterity rather than by strength. But as the Council of Seventeen observed in a general letter of the 30th October 1776 "the deep decline in which these forces were, had been observed even by the native princes and had made an impression on their mind." The Dutch at Cochin had to depend upon the services of native troops whenever there was an emergency and this involved considerable expenditure for them. Moens was of opinion that it was better to keep in their service native Christians and 'Chegos' (Chovas or Ezhavas) as they were more faithful than the sepoys. From the writings of Moens it is clear that the Dutch at Cochin were occasionally sending soldiers to Batavia. In 1779 about 190 men were sent to Batavia. In the



next year the Batavian Government asked for about 300 more of which 180 were sent.

The Dutch garrisons in Malabar, though small in number were well equipped. At Quilon the Dutch had a big store house for gun powder. From the writings of Gollennesse it appears that the Dutch were formerly sending "spoilt gun powder to Ceylon to be made up again." But during his time the Jews of Cochin were doing that work. Gollennesse says that in his time about 3,100 lbs. of spoilt gun powder had been imported to Cochin to be made useful again by some methods known to the Jews. The gun powder store house at Quilon seems to have been a worn out one, and there were frequent suggestions to construct a new one there. The artillery equipment of the Dutch was not very weak. At Cochin they had 150 guns, at Ayakotta 10 guns, on the island of Muthukunnu 3 guns, at Cranganore 22 guns and at Quilon 14 guns. Besides these, they had guns on board the ships and in reserve field artillery, mortars, etc.<sup>1</sup>

The marine force of the Dutch was comparatively insignificant. Moens writes in 1781 "We have only a two-masted and one-masted sloop and a quick sailing native vessel besides seven gamels and three little couts which are used for wading and discharging cargo and for fetching water daily from higher up the river for the garrison, besides a row boat for towing and for taking people to and from ships. Three of the gamels are equipped for war so that use can be made of them in the river." The Dutch were employing native Mukhavas (fishermen) to man their vessels and to work in the dock-yard. They had a few European soldiers in their service and some experienced linesmen and gunners.

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1. Appendix VII to the Memoirs of Moens.

## CHAPTER XIV

## THE POLICY OF THE DUTCH IN MALABAR

## A. ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY.

IT is easy to discover that the Dutch were following no steady policy in Malabar. Their policy changed with the changes in circumstances. They had also different policies with the different princes of Malabar. We always find the Dutch making frequent adjustments in their general policy towards the Rajas of Malabar—adjustments always dictated by prudence and necessity. We may, however, note in general that their policy falls into two distinct periods. They were following one general policy from the capture of Cochin to the treaty of Mavelikara. From the treaty of Mavelikara onwards, they were following, rather they were compelled to follow, an essentially different policy.

The principal object of the Dutch in driving the Portuguese out of Malabar was to possess the monopoly of the pepper trade. But, this was not so easy a task as the Dutch thought in the beginning. Soon, they realised that in order to enforce the monopoly, they must have an armed force in the country. When they maintained an armed force it was inevitable that they would get themselves entangled in the local politics. When once they took an interest in the Governmental affairs of the Malabar princes, they could not but take an interest in seeing their sovereign rights recognised in the country. Thus, they tried to carry on trade with the backing of political power. It was too late when the Dutch realised the mistake in their policy. By that time they had lost both their trade and political power.

The political condition in Malabar was, no doubt, responsible for inducing the Dutch to appear as a sovereign power. The merchants who captured the Cochin fort in 1663 found that they could very easily bring the whole of Cochin under their influence. The destruction of the Portuguese power in Cochin had thrown the entire State into confusion and in the absence of a powerful ruler, anarchy prevailed there. The throne was keenly contested by rival parties and soon opportunities presented themselves for



the Dutch to appear as king-makers in Cochin. When the Cochin Raja was crowned by the Dutch Governor under the insignia of the Company, the Dutch Company ceased to be a pure trading corporation; it became a sovereign power with the onerous responsibility of protecting a prince on the throne. The Dutch made the best use of the helplessness of the Cochin Raja and cleverly pushed on their commercial designs. We have already seen that the relations between the Raja of Cochin and the Dutch were not always cordial. The Raja was frequently complaining about the high handedness of the Dutch authorities, while the Dutch were feeling disconcerted about the disloyalty of the Raja. However, the Dutch always took care to see that the Raja gave them the fixed quota of pepper.

When the Dutch found that they could very easily establish their supremacy in Cochin, they were tempted to extend it to other parts of Malabar. The frequent disputes among the native princes gave them convenient opportunities. They posed themselves as arbitrators to settle these disputes. Meanwhile, they had humbled the Zamorin of Calicut and extended their trade influence to many parts of northern Malabar. Their fortifications at Cochin, Cranganore, Cannanore, Ayakotta and other places had made them a power to be feared by the weak princes and nobles of Malabar.

It is probable that if the Dutch had confined their attentions to the north instead of interfering in the politics of Travancore, they could have succeeded in maintaining their possessions at least in the north. But, they took the unwise policy of appearing as the supporters of rival factions in Travancore—a policy which led to their final ruin. We may say in fairness to the Dutch that they were dragged into the politics of the South by the force of new circumstances. They could not have remained as silent spectators of the new and rapid turn of events in the South, even though that was actually what their policy finally came to. The rise of Marthanda Varma foiled all their schemes and placed them in a completely altered position. Marthanda Varma's military activities radically altered the political system of Malabar and in that revolutionary process of change the Dutch found their position also upset. It was no doubt foolish on the part of the Dutch to have appeared on the scene as the champions

of the smaller princes against Marthanda Varma. The Dutch were trying to play the role of arbitrators between the princes of the South. But, unlike as in the north, there was a Marthanda Varma in the South who was never prepared to accept the mediation of the Dutch. When the Raja of Kayamkulam applied to the Dutch Governor for help against Marthanda Varma, the Dutch were not prepared to commit themselves to any undertakings. Even though the Dutch did not send help to Kayamkulam, they warned the Travancore Raja to desist from violating the territories of other princes. But, the warnings of the Dutch as we have already seen, had very little effect on Marthanda Varma. He went ahead with his scheme of annexation. When he quietly dispossessed the Rani of Elayadathu Swaroopam of her territories, the Dutch thought it was time they took strong steps. This brought the Company into a most disastrous war with Travancore—a war which taught the Dutch a most valuable lesson of experience in the East. Finally the Dutch had to bow to the inevitable. And with their characteristic knack of making the best of every thing, they accepted the terms of Marthanda Varma at Mavelikara. The treaty of Mavelikara was the inglorious end of the ambitious phase of the Company's career in Malabar. This treaty which neither brought credit nor money stripped the Dutch of all their pretences to sovereign authority and placed them again in the position of merchants. The Dutch were to follow a new policy thereafter.

The Dutch Governor Moens realised more than any body else that new circumstances had set in and that a new policy to suit the circumstances should be followed. A valuable lesson which the Dutch learned from the ruinous war with Travancore was that it was not expedient to entangle the Company in another war. The Dutch realised that if the Company's concerns continued to be directed on the old principles, a complete decline was to be expected. The following were some of the weighty considerations<sup>1</sup> for the Dutch at that time for giving up their old policy and adopting a new one :—

“Even if we are completely successful (against Travancore), it would not be of an advantage to us commensurate with the cost of war, because the other chiefs having obtained elbow

<sup>1</sup> Memoirs of Moens.



rooms would go their old ways again on account of their well known and proved ingratitude without for this reason supplying more pepper than they used to ;

"That wars have rather served on the one hand to reveal the impotence of Europeans against the natives of the country, if they have to be brought to reason by force of arms, on the other hand to impose a great and unbearable burden on us than to bring to the Company something substantial proportioned to the great hazards, inconveniences, burdens and losses which it has brought on itself on this coast more than once by wars ;

"That each time the war ends, all the expenses of maintenance of a garrison cannot be reduced all at once and so according as anything happens from time to time the expenses gradually and imperceptibly grew."

Finally the Dutch decided that in the future, affairs ought to be looked upon from another point of view, and native chiefs should be allowed to attack one another although they should ruin each other. It was this policy that compelled them to make peace with Travancore. By making peace with Travancore the Dutch were ignoring all their former treaty obligations with the Malabar Rajas and chieftains. They were fully conscious of the fact that a treaty with Travancore would endanger their prestige and fair name in Malabar. But, they were not prepared to follow the alternative policy of allying with the Malabar princes against the Travancore Raja. If they had pursued that policy their sovereign position in Malabar would have been rightly vindicated. But, the Dutch thought "it was in any case better to make their authority grow imperceptibly again by means of the new system than by sticking to the old to see it gradually brought more and more to scorn."

But, we have already seen the disastrous consequences of this new policy. To put in a nut-shell, it resulted in the annihilation of Dutch influence in Malabar.

The treaty the Dutch had signed with Travancore did not in any way solve their pressing problems. On the contrary, it only worsened them. The Amsterdam Government wrote to the Dutch authorities at Batavia (letters dated 13th October, 1755 and 4th October, 1756) that they should be watching the progress

of the Travancore prince and be "on their guard at every turn of events." They were afraid that Travancore would be "a dangerous neighbour to the Company," and therefore the Dutch in Malabar were to see that "one party was kept in check by the other." But it was no longer in the power of the Dutch to play the role of the keepers of the political balance of Malabar; they themselves were in grave danger of extinction. When the Dutch Commandant tried to persuade the Travancore Raja from desisting from his aggressive designs on the neighbouring countries, the Raja plainly told him that it would be better to mind his own business.

We have already noticed that the Dutch were following in Cochin a policy entirely different from what they were following in other parts of Malabar. This was because of the fact that they had assumed the protectorate of the kingdom of Cochin. By their treaty with the Cochin Raja, they had committed themselves to the task of protecting the integrity of his State at all costs. The Dutch had some important and "weighty reasons" for the retention of their power in Cochin. Visscher<sup>1</sup> gives three 'weighty' reasons for its retention. The first was that it was highly necessary for the promotion of their pepper trade in Malabar. The main object of the Dutch, as we have often stressed, was to obtain the monopoly of the pepper trade and this could be made possible only by keeping their territorial supremacy in Cochin. The Dutch knew perfectly well, that if they were to give up their sovereign position in Cochin, the Portuguese would regain their lost power. Further, the English also were having an eye on Cochin. The second consideration was that it was very useful as a provisioning station for vessels sailing from Batavia to Mocha, or returning from Surat and Persia to Batavia. They could obtain at Cochin plenty of victuals like poultry, pigs, cattle, fish and fruits at a very cheap rate. The third 'weighty reason' for the retention of Cochin was that it served as an outpost to protect Ceylon from the attacks of other European nations. The Dutch were aware of the designs of the English on Ceylon. And they understood the value of the Cochin fort for all measures of defence.

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1. Visscher letter No. VI.



Visscher<sup>1</sup> gives some useful hints to the Dutch Commandants of Cochin to be followed in their relations with the local Rajas. He says that the Commandant should be very ready—witted when he converses with the Rajas. He must also cultivate “a figurative and metaphorical mode of expression which, besides being considered a proof of wisdom, would enable him to throw a cloak over subjects which were disagreeable to them and to carry out measures which they would not take so easily if they were expressed in plain words.”

Visscher suggests five important rules to be followed by the Commandant for the successful management of the country.

(1) “The Commandant must effectually defend the kingdom of Cochin against the future attacks of its enemies to which end the Company have declared themselves the protector of that kingdom. If this were not done, the Zamorin would weaken the power of the Raja of Cochin and would allow the other nations to establish themselves in the territories he might gain.”

(2) “The Commandant must especially endeavour to prevent the Raja of Cochin from making aggressions on the Zamorin or others or provoking them to war; which he would be very ready to do relying on the Company's arms and hoping by their assistance to regain some lands which he lays claim.”

(3) “He must enquire narrowly into the justice of the claims the Rajas make mutually on each other as he is often called on to arbitrate between them. This is the more necessary as their claims are very obscure and are seldom settled, so that they have continual pretexts for the wars which perpetually arise between them. A wise Commandant will take care not to involve himself in these disputes unless they immediately affect the interests of the Company.”

(4) “He must be thoroughly acquainted with the laws and customs of the natives who cling very much to them making a part of their religion. They carry these feelings to such an extent that if a Commandant were unwillingly to intringe their laws in passing sentence it would arouse a general spirit of of murmuring and dissatisfaction.”

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1. Visscher letter No. VI.

(5) "He must undertake no wars without great deliberation and with a good prospect of success as the Company might otherwise be placed in danger."

Summing up all these advices of Visscher we may say that the key-note of the policy he recommended was to keep the Company away from local wars. In posing as the protectors of Cochin, the Dutch knew they could not evade wars entirely. But they wanted to see that the Cochin Raja did not misuse the Company's pledge of assistance for his own private ends. Commandant Johannes Hertenberg had exacted a stipulation from the Raja of Cochin that he would not undertake any hostilities against the Zamorin or any other prince without the previous knowledge and consent of the Company.

It is interesting to examine how far the Dutch were able to keep up their pledge of protecting Cochin from its enemies. The Zamorin was the traditional enemy of Cochin and the Dutch had given ample warning to Cochin not to give any provocation for war to the Zamorin. From 1701 to 1710 the Dutch had however to take up sides with Cochin against Calicut. But soon they realised that it was a mistake on their part to spend the Company's resources for a war for the protection of Cochin. In 1721 the Batavian Government passed a resolution that the Cochin Raja was no longer to be assisted in his wars with the Zamorin. The Dutch Government at Cochin was scrupulously following a policy of "masterly inactivity." Even when the aggressive activities of Marthanda Varma threatened the integrity of Cochin, the Dutch were not prepared to lend active assistance to the Raja. The Raja of Cochin continued to remonstrate before the Dutch authorities at Cochin and Batavia. He used to complain before the Dutch Commandant about the great injustice that had been done to him. When he found the Cochin Government indifferent, he wrote bitter letters of complaint to Batavia. But the Dutch were in no mood to help him. Even if they wanted to help him, they were not in a position to do so. The maximum concession they could exact from Marthanda Varma was that he would live in friendship with the Raja of Cochin provided the latter would give no cause to the contrary! But Marthanda Varma was to be the judge of the Cochin Raja's conduct. It was open to him to turn against Cochin at any



moment on the ground that Cochin had given reasons for a war. We have already seen how Cochin was compelled to enter into a treaty with Travancore by which Cochin relieved herself of all obligations to the Dutch.

If the new policy of the Dutch proved disastrous to their interests with the rise of Marthanda Varma, it proved all the more so with the invasion of the Mysoreans. In the course of the Mysoorean invasions, the Dutch displayed a genius for 'timid diplomacy' which made them appear ridiculous before the Malabar princes. They first tried to court the friendship of Hyder Ali. But Hyder treated all their overtures with studied contempt. The Dutch took all precautions to give no room for offence to Tippu Sultan. But, Tippu also had realised the powerlessness of the Dutch in Malabar. The policy of the Dutch in this period was quite characteristic of a merchant association. They viewed every thing from a selfish angle and adjusted their policies accordingly. But political power had slipped off their hands long before, and therefore, they had ceased to matter in settling the affairs of Malabar in the latter half of the 18th century.

We may say in conclusion about the Dutch policy in Malabar that commercial interests governed their administrative policy and their administrative policy ruined their commercial interests.

#### B. ECONOMIC POLICY

The pathetic declaration of Governor General Mossel that he wished the ocean had swallowed up the coast of Malabar is a good commentary on the achievements of the Dutch in this country. It was for the promotion of their pepper trade that the Dutch tried to obtain political rights in the country. It was for this purpose alone that they waged their expensive wars with the Malabar chieftains. The selling of pepper to other nations was stigmatised as contraband trade and in order to prevent this the Dutch had very often to use force. But they were disillusioned in their objects even at the very beginning of their relations with the Malabar princes. Even if they could compel the Rajas to sell their pepper to the Company, they could not prevent the people from 'carrying on their trade with other nations. Soon the Dutch realised that Malabar was a very

expensive settlement. Visscher<sup>1</sup> writes "Malabar is considered by the East India Company as an expensive settlement for the profits obtained on the goods which are sold here are far from defraying the expenses required for its support." The same view was expressed by Stavorinus. He observes: "Amongst the several conquests and settlements which the Dutch Company have made or established in the Indies, that of Malabar is not one of the most advantageous or important to the Dutch. It costs the Company much money, on account of the destructive wars in which they have in consequence engaged the rivalry in trade of numerous competitors and through last not least the infidelity and speculation of their servants."

The greatest regret of the Dutch in Malabar was that their trade profits and territorial revenues did not commensurate with their expenditure. Malabar was an unimportant settlement for the Dutch from the point of view of revenue.<sup>2</sup> Even though Malabar was always described as an expensive settlement it should not be taken to mean that the administration of Malabar was always running on a deficit basis. There were many periods when the revenues exceeded the expenses. The administrative reforms of Moens helped a great deal in the augmentation of the

1. Visschers letter No. VI.

2. FINANCES OF DIFFERENT POSSESSIONS:—1760—68.

(In Guilders at about 11 to an English sovereign.)

(N. B.—The figures are in thousands.)

Possessions.	Territorial revenues.	Trade profits.	Total revenue.	Charges
1. Surat	19	6,050	6,069	1,928
2. Coromandel	511	6,407	6,918	6,111
3. Bengal	653	2,909	3,562	7,967
4. Ceylon	6,453	3,055	9,507	23,101
5. Cape of Good Hope	1,409	324	1,733	4,125
6. Samarang (East coast of Java)	2,315	988	3,303	3,068
7. Batavia	9,318	22,000	31,318	31,373
8. Malabar	938	2,455	3,393	5,471

(Taken from Gallett's Introduction to Dutch in Malabar.)

From this list the comparative insignificance of Malabar as a source of income for the Dutch can be known clearly. Malabar was a poor settlement when compared with the Spice Islands or Ceylon.



Company's resources and the curtailment of unnecessary expenses. In 1770-1771 the expenses of the Company amounted to only £. 205,570 while the income was £. 325,687. The following were the items of general revenues and tolls levied by the Company in the time of Moens :—

- (1) On imports and exports of Cochin.
- (2)       "       "       of Quilon
- (3)       "       "       of Cranganore.
- (4) On export of slaves.
- (5) Beer-measure.
- (6) The town inn.
- (7) Sury (toddy) and arrack within the town.
- (8) Sury and arrack outside the town.
- (9) Sury and arrack on the island of Vypeen.
- (10) Tobacco revenue within and without town.
- (11)       "       on the island of Bendurty.
- (12)       "       at Cranganore.
- (13) The tolls of the ferry at Vypeen.
- (14) The tolls of the ferry at Anji Caimal.

In Moens' time the gardens and fields were leased out for Rs. 13,674 for a fixed period of twenty years. This system of more or less a permanent revenue settlement was followed as an inducement to cultivators to improve the lands by intensive cultivation. Their tenure for twenty years would be an encouragement for planting more cocoanut trees which were the main sources of income in these lands. Most of the items of revenue were given on a contract basis to local merchants. In the time of Moens the total revenue of the Company (excluding the duty on the export of slaves) amounted to 41,750 Rupees a year.

The revenue administration of the Company was thoroughly reorganised in the time of Moens. His watch word was 'Economy' but he insisted that one must "practise a 'right' and not a 'wrong' economy for the latter was just as injurious, as the former was in the highest degree useful and necessary." The Commandant believed that entrusting the work of building and fortifications to contractors was advantageous from the point of view of cheapness. The Company used to have a close supervision over the work of the contractors. At times the

Company would advance money to the contractors or supply them with materials. Moens gives five rules which according to him constituted the right kind of economy. They were (1) To see that everything was maintained in good condition by means of daily supervision and precautions. (2) When defects or decays were discovered they were to be set right as soon as possible. (3) Works of repairs and fortifications were to be given to contractors who were to be under the direct supervision of the Company's commissioners. In order to secure efficiency of work the Commandant should inspect such works personally. (4) Closest supervision was to be given for works which were not given on contract but which were executed at the expense of the Company. The Commandant must carefully check every bill that was submitted for approval by the Company's servants and find out for himself the correctness or otherwise of the facts contained in the bill. (5) No expenditure whatever was to be incurred on behalf of the Company except such as was highly necessary and unavoidable.

The great importance Moens again and again attached to economy shows how weak the finances of the Company in Malabar were. The Dutch showed a miser's thrift and anxiety in all their activities in Malabar. They viewed their whole enterprise in Malabar purely from a merchant's point of view and were always anxious to see that Malabar caused no unnecessary burden on their resources at Batavia. From the very beginning the Dutch authorities were advising their Commandants in Cochin to follow the strictest economy possible. The maintenance of the fortifications at Cochin, Cranganore and Cannanore was always considered as too expensive by the Dutch and orders had been issued as early as 1686 to reduce the garrisons there. In 1697 the Supreme Government at Batavia passed certain very important resolutions concerning their fortifications and possessions in Malabar. They were as follows :—

(1) " That the fortifications of the city of Cochin which by the large garrison it required and the continual reparations to be made in consequence of the great extent of the walls, were too expensive for the Company to maintain, should be reduced by one half."



(2) "That of the present fortifications of Cannanore, the Portuguese tower should only be preserved with a garrison of twenty or at the most twenty five European soldiers, to which number the present garrison should be reduced.

(3) "That at Cranganore the ancient interior works should only be preserved with a garrison of twenty Europeans, which is judged a sufficient number for the purposes of the Company here."

(4) "That it is likewise judged advisable at Quilon no more should be retained than the old Portuguese tower or as much of the present works as may be thought necessary for the interest of the Company with fifteen or twenty men to which number the establishment should be reduced and that the remainder of the fortifications of the three last mentioned places should be removed or demolished. It was further thereby determined that all military outposts should be withdrawn except that of Paponetty; Porakkad and Kayamkulam should be retained as Residencies or factories in order to keep an eye over what may be going forward all along the coast and to avail of such opportunities of trade as might occur."

"Vessels of all descriptions were to be reduced to one small yacht, two sloops and three row boats."

"The number of pieces of artillery which should be henceforth employed upon the fortifications, should be fixed at 95 pieces of iron and six pieces of brass, ordinance with two mortars; and about 530 Europeans and 37 natives were judged sufficient for the service of the Company."

We have already observed how the successive Dutch Commandants at Cochin were unwilling to carry out these instructions *in toto*. Of course, they realised the great necessity for economy, but many of them stoutly maintained that if these instructions were carried out, the Company would lose its hold in Malabar. The influence of the Dutch in Malabar mainly depended on their military strength. If they were to give up their fortifications, they would have to give up their trade also. Further

the Dutch in Malabar, frequently engaged as they were in warfare, could not afford to reduce their fortifications. However much they tried to keep themselves off from their costly wars, they always found themselves involved in them. Some of the Dutch Commandants at Cochin maintained that the question of reducing the garrisons and demolishing fortresses should be left mainly to their discretion. The Batavian Government, being not in direct contact with the affairs in Malabar, was guided by only one motive—viz., economy. But the Dutch Governors who were thoroughly acquainted with the affairs of Malabar held that this measure of economy would be suicidal to their own interests. Moens says "Economy does not exclude doing what is necessary and I am of opinion it would be wrong to practise blind obedience in this matter. For we are supposed to possess a special and local knowledge of the circumstances of the places in which we are stationed. It therefore we receive certain instructions from higher authority with regard to something in the interests of economy, but we are convinced in our own minds that it would not really answer or would have had consequences and should yet obey (if this can be called obedience) then we should be obeying blindly and even liable to punishment, or at least responsible for the consequences." Moens was of opinion that in such cases the Commandants should point out to the Supreme Government the reasons why the instructions should not be carried out. He was confident that the Supreme Government would respect the opinion of the Commandants. •

But the Dutch displayed the haste of a shop-keeper who was winding up his business in a certain locality as it was unpromising. The Dutch realised that their expensive settlements in Malabar would serve them no desirable purpose. As Stavorinus remarks "The ostentation of a great power which cost the Company such large sums of money had not the effect of producing in Native Princes that degree of awe and apprehension which was indispensably necessary for carrying out an exclusive trade." Therefore they decided to wind up their business by selling their important fortresses to the native Rajas and by sending back large number of their servants and soldiers to Batavia. What they did not sell was forcibly captured from them by the English.



## C. RELIGIOUS POLICY

The history of the Dutch in Malabar is not stained by any heinous acts of forcible conversion or religious persecution. It must be said to the credit of the Dutch that they have left behind an unblemished record of religious activities. In this respect the Dutch stand in striking contrast to the Portuguese. The Portuguese with their sectarian fanaticism placed conversion above commerce in their programme of activities on the Malabar coast. Their policy of conversion was not quite pleasing to the Malabar princes. The Raja of Cochin had strictly forbidden his subjects under pain of very heavy penalties to embrace Roman Catholicism. But, when the Portuguese power became dominant in Malabar, this prohibition was withdrawn. The Portuguese followed an active policy of religious propaganda and even introduced a system of inquisition in order to suppress the anti-Catholic activities of the Jews. The Portuguese carried on their policy of conversion not only among the Hindus but among the Syrian Christians also. Syrian Christians of Malabar, following the tradition that they were converted by the Apostle St. Thomas himself owed allegiance to the see of Antioch in spiritual affairs. They had always stood loyal by their kings in Malabar, and as such had enjoyed many rights and privileges. But their church was not well organised. Neither were the finances of the church sound enough to take up any missionary activities. The Portuguese backed up by their sovereign rights in Malabar, could easily convert many ancient Syrians to Roman Catholicism—a policy which led to bitter hostility between the followers of the two faiths. The Syrian Christians, persecuted by the Portuguese, had taken a solemn pledge in an assembly at Mattancherry never to obey Roman Bishops or follow the rites introduced by the Portuguese. When the Dutch obtained domination in Malabar, the Syrian Christians looked up to them for protection from religious persecution. By the treaty of 1663 between Cochin and the Dutch all the Christians were placed under the protection of the Company. The Dutch fort of Cochin was mainly inhabited by Christians and they were all under the jurisdiction of the Company. It has always been a matter of controversy between the Cochin Raja and the Dutch whether the Christians in Cochin were under the

complete jurisdiction of the Company or not. By the treaty of 1664 it was stipulated that "those Christians who reside in the Raja's territory should obey and perform their obligations to that Government as the heathens do." Moens observes in his *Memoirs* that the Christians in Malabar had always been relying upon the protection of the Dutch Company. Probably they thought that by placing themselves under the Company's protection, they could escape the payment of taxes to the king. Moens says, "They are no doubt under the protection of the Company, but are in reality subjects of the king, at least those who reside in this territory (Cochin) because there are so many Christians who live in the territory of the Company and are therefore as a matter of fact subjects of the Company. It is the same with the native Christians who are now under the king of Travancore in so far as they inhabit the territory which formerly belonged to the king of Cochin but has since been conquered by the king of Travancore. The Company retains its protection over them." The Company's protection did not mean immunity from punishments. If the Christians were offenders of the Raja's laws they had to suffer the same penalty as the non-Christians. But the ancient Christians enjoyed one important privilege, and that was, they had to pay to the king only half the tax the Hindus had to pay. This privilege, however, was not extended to the new converts. The new converts had to pay the same amount of tax as the Hindus were paying. The Company usually extended its protection only in cases where Christians were harassed by the Rajas or the Hindus in the observance of their religious rites and ceremonies. Even in such cases, the Company would not blindly assist the Christians. It was always the policy of the Dutch to bring moral pressure on the Rajas to see that justice was done to their Christian subjects.

There were frequent disputes between the Cochin Raja and the Dutch concerning the jurisdiction over the native Christians. The treaty of 1663 stated "All free persons and those belonging to the church if subjects of the king of Portugal and those who might be wandering through the country should be included in this treaty." It was clearly stated in this treaty that "All Christians who had been formerly subject to the Government of this fort (Cochin) were to be under the protection of the Dutch Company."



In short, the Dutch claimed protection over the Roman Catholics of Cochin who were formerly under the jurisdiction of the Portuguese. But later, when serious disputes arose between the Raja and the Dutch over this question, it was pointed out by Mr. Powney, the English Commissioner that there was a significant difference in the wording of the treaty as it appeared in the Malayalam copy and the Dutch copy. In the Malayalam copy the Dutch were stated to be having jurisdiction only over the 'Mundukars.' In the Dutch copy, however, the word 'Mundukars' was further explained as referring to all Christians. The Raja held that 'Mundukars' only meant the fishermen of the coast. But Van Anglebeck, the Dutch Commandant at that time, maintained that it included all those who followed the latin ritual.

The Syrian Christians however were not under the complete jurisdiction of the Company. Moens states this fact very clearly. "The Company has never had any authority nor could have over the St. Thomas Christians who were always subjects of the country princes. Not even the Portuguese exercised any jurisdiction over them although they did their utmost with the consent of the king of Cochin to make these Christians accept the doctrines of Rome and acknowledge the hierarchy of the Pope." But the Dutch were taking a keen interest in the affairs of the Syrian Christians also. Probably that might have been due to the fact that the Syrian Christians stoutly opposed the Papal see and the Romish Church. When the three Antiochan Bishops arrived at Malabar, we find the Dutch Commander giving them a very hospitable welcome. They were taken in a Dutch ship from Persia to Malabar. At Cochin the Dutch Commander took special care for their accommodation. We also find the Dutch Commander recommending them to the Travancore Raja's special protection when they were introduced to the Raja at Mavelikara in 1753. The Dutch took great interest in the protection of their rights. Moens says, "The administrators of this coast and the preachers of the reformed community have not only kept up a correspondence with the St. Thomas Christians about maintaining, and advised them to maintain steadfastly the rights of the Eastern Church against the bishops of the Roman Catholics, but have also displayed much zeal in attempting to unite them with

the Protestant Church." It was the great ambition of Moens to effect a union between the Syrian and the Protestant churches. He firmly believed that there was a greater possibility of a union between the Syrians and the Protestants than between the Syrians and the Catholics. The Dutch Commander had invited many learned Syrian priests to his house at Cochin to discuss the possibilities of such a union. The Dutch authorities at Amsterdam too had this object in view and had given special instructions to their officers in Malabar to pursue this policy.

Van Angelbeck mentions two important rights exercised by the Dutch in Cochin over the Christians. (1) All the Christians in Cochin were to be tried by the Dutch. (2) The Raja was not to impose new taxes on the Christians without the knowledge of the Company. But when the Cochin Rajas saw that the power of the Dutch was steadily declining in Malabar, they pressed their rights further over the Christians. By the treaty of 1785 the latin converts "were to pay a tax to the Raja which was to be collected by their own headmen but, should they fail to realise the same, the Dutch Government was obliged to collect it and pay it over to the Raja." The treaty also said "Should Christians purchase or rent lands from the heathens, they were liable to imposter which the purely Christian lands were exempt from."

We have already noticed how the fresh enthusiasm of the Protestant religion had been a powerful stimulus for the political and commercial progress of Holland. When Holland was liberated from the shackles of Catholic Spain, she commenced her new career as a political power in Europe contesting the supremacy of Spain and Portugal beyond the seas. Holland appeared as the rival of Spain and Portugal in religious as well as commercial activities. But even though the Dutch were able to supplant the Portuguese and the Spaniards in the commercial field, they were not quite successful in the realm of religion. This was mainly due to the fact that their programme of religious activities was not so vigorous as that of their rivals. Speaking about the influence of the Protestant religion in Malabar, Gollennesse says, "To my sincere regret I must confess that the Reformed Doctrine has made little progress in spite of all careful forethought and the regulations concerning schools and education of children and



the instructions regarding the penetration of Popish superstitions." Gollennesse bitterly regrets that he could not effectively counteract the propaganda of the Catholics in Malabar. Almost all the children of the European employees married to Catholic women were in his time brought up in the Catholic faith. The Commander made some earnest efforts to teach them the new Protestant faith, but his chief difficulty was that the Dutch language was thoroughly unfamiliar to the people. Portuguese missionaries could carry on their propaganda in their own language which was fairly popular in Malabar. They were also acquainted with Malayalam which placed them on a position of distinct advantage. "What can the zeal of a reformed preacher, whom nobody can understand" observes Gollennesse "do to combat the bustle of the thousand Romish priests in this coast who are perfectly equipped with the necessary knowledge of the languages?" But it is doubtful whether the Dutch in general showed the necessary zeal of a reformed preacher. If they had shown that zeal, certainly they could have combated the "bustle" of the Jesuit priests who were hated by the bulk of the native population at that time.

Moens' exhaustive Memoirs deal with every branch of the activities of the Dutch in Malabar. Speaking about the importance of propagating the Protestant religion in Malabar, he gives certain advices to be followed by the Dutch Commandants.

(1) The Commandant must set a good example to the community by himself attending public worship regularly.

(2) He must stand up for the good cause publicly and show his partiality for those that excel in learning and virtue.

(3) He should give a fairfield to the Teachers and even encourage them always to have recourse confidently with him. He must listen to them kindly when they want assistance for the purposes of religion, or the church and show friendliness to them and hold them in due respect.

(4) He must take care that "the sailors, infantry and gunners are marched to church in an orderly manner every Sunday, and that when the military are in barracks or in the field a psalm is sung and night prayers are said every evening."

(5) Finally the Commandant must take care that "the Sunday should not be disecrated but that on that day, which is set apart from a general to a particular use, all public trades and crafts are suspended—necessary cases and extra-ordinary circumstances exempted—so that everywhere in and outside the town you may see it is Sunday."

These instructions of Moens are characteristic of an enthusiastic reformer of the 18th century. But how far the other Dutch Commandants followed these rules, is a doubtful question.

The Dutch in Malabar had only one church and that was at Cochin. When the Portuguese maintained their domination in Malabar they had established numerous churches and monasteries in all parts of the country. There was a church in almost every factory and attached to most of the churches were the monasteries of Jesuit monks and other missionaries. There were also important Portuguese churches at Mattancherry and Perimani (behind the island of Vendurti). Besides these, there were forty seven Syrian churches following Catholic doctrines. When the Dutch replaced the Portuguese, the Latin Christians and their churches came under their special protection.<sup>1</sup>

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1. The following is a list of the important Latin churches which were under the protection of the Dutch Company in the time of Moens :—

- (1) Vypeen
- (2) Miraculous Cross in Vypeen
- (3) Valarparam
- (4) Paliport in Vypeen
- (5) Cranganore
- (6) Paponetty
- (7) Chettwaye
- (8) Vendurti
- (9) Anji Caimal (Ernakulam)
- (10) Mattancherry
- (11) Senhora de Sande and the Chapel of St. Jaquebrado which belongs to it
- (12) St. Louis with its chapel of St. Jago
- (13) Castello (Eda Cochil)
- (14) St. Abdre with the chapels of Tangie (Edatinkal) 'Tombolie, Caturty' and Mani corde (Manacorom)

In the time of Gollennesse, there were eleven Roman parishes under the jurisdiction of the Dutch. They were (1) Saint Louis (2) Sr. Saude (3) Mattanchery (4) Vypeen (5) Cruz de Milagre (6) Paliport (7) Cranganore (8) Valarparam (9) Anji Caimal (10) Vendurti (11) Palurty

Even though these churches were under the control of the Dutch they made no attempts to demolish them or convert them into Protestant institutions



The Protestant church at Cochin was administered by a Church Council consisting of the Preacher, two Elders and four Deacons. The church council was to report to the Commandant whatever had been decided at its meetings. The Dutch had some charitable institutions in the country, the most important of them being the Orphanage and the Leper Asylum. The Orphanage was for taking care of the poor children who had lost their parents. They were given free education by the Deacons. Only Orphans of European parentage were admitted to this institution. Preference was shown for orphans of Protestant faith. Children of Catholic parents also could be admitted to the orphanage and they were at liberty to choose their own religion when they came of age. If they chose to become Catholics the cost of their education and upbringing had to be demanded from the Catholic priests. The boys in the Orphanage were under the direct supervision of the Deacons. After their education in the Orphanage they were put to some profession suitable to their tastes.

The Leper Asylum was at Pallipport on the island of Vypeen. There were many patients suffering from leprosy and the Dutch had always taken elaborate care to prevent the wide spread of this disease by segregating the lepers from others. The Company had a special commission of inspection which was responsible for reporting all cases of leprosy in the locality. The leper house had a special fund of its own, administered by special trustees. But later this was placed under the management of the Deacons.

The liberal policy of religious toleration and the charitable activities of the Dutch deserve real praise. Even though the Dutch at first showed some antagonism towards the Catholics, they were later treated with great toleration and courtesy. The Jesuits who were asked to leave Cochin when the fort was captured were allowed to return and settle down within the territories of the Company. The toleration extended by the Dutch towards the Catholics was greatly appreciated even by the Pope. The following is a letter addressed by the Pope Clement XIV to the Vicar Apostolic of Malabar :—

“Greetings to our Reverend Brother: Our beloved son Stephen Boyd, Secretary to the Congregation for the propagation

of Christians had communicated to us in detail the attention paid and the trouble taken by the Dutch Governor for the safety of the Christians who are there yonder. And as such Christian acts of kindness undoubtedly concern us greatly and as on their account we are indebted to him, so it is our earnest desire that at least our feelings of gratitude for the same be made known and clear to this man. Therefore to show our gratitude we have hereby to recommend to Your Reverence to assure him of our grateful sentiments in the most forcible and the most striking manner and at the same time to testify that we feel ourselves so much more indebted to him for what he has done as we flatter ourselves that he will continue in this way to lay the Christians and us under further obligation."

"Given at Rome the 23rd July 1772 in the 4th year of our Papal reign. Stephen Borgia."

The Dutch policy towards the Hindus was even more generous. They always respected Hindu temples and other places of worship. Even in the question of slaughter of cows, we find the Dutch promising the Cochin Raja to lend all their help in punishing the offenders. In the long history of their relations with the Hindu princes and people of Malabar we can scarcely get an instance when the Dutch deviated from their traditional policy of toleration. Even when engaged in warfare they never indulged in foolish acts of iconoclastic vandalism. Perhaps, the only instance when the Dutch wounded the religious susceptibilities of the Hindus was when some of their soldiers desecrated the temple of Punnathu Nambidi in the course of the war with the Zamorin. But even this was done without the knowledge of the Commander.



## CHAPTER XV

## THE DUTCH TRADE IN MALABAR

THE policy of the Dutch in Malabar has been described as "maximum pepper trade with minimum expense." Pepper was the main attraction for the Dutch in Malabar, and as Gollennesse clearly states "it was for the sake of this grain that the Company maintained its expensive establishments on the coast." As we have very often stated, the principal object of the Dutch in Malabar was to possess the monopoly of pepper trade. But they were disillusioned in this even at the very beginning. In all their contracts with the native princes they had stipulated that all the pepper should be sold to them without fixing the price definitely. The rivalry of the other European merchants soon made it impossible for them to secure the monopoly in trade. Other merchants were offering higher prices for the pepper and naturally the people would sell their pepper only to those who would offer higher prices. Discussing this question, Stavorinus says: "They however early met with much disappointment on this head, (viz., securing the monopoly of pepper trade) both by the bad faith of the Malabar princes and by the constantly increasing competition of European rivals who adopted a surer mode of obtaining as much pepper as they wanted by always following the market price or even paying something above it, while our Company continually insisted upon the performance of the contracts that no pepper should be furnished to any others although a fixed price was never stated in them and they only speak of the market price as the rule to go by." The Dutch stigmatised selling of pepper to foreign nations as contraband trade, but they had no power to stop it.<sup>1</sup>

1. The Abbe Raynal makes the following observations on the trade of the Dutch in 1760:—"The Company have not succeeded in their hope of excluding other European nations from this coast. They procure no kind of merchandise here but what they are furnished with from their other settlements and being rivalled in their trade they are obliged to give a higher price here than in the markets where they enjoy an exclusive privilege."

Quoted by K. P. P. Menon, *History of Kerala*, Vol. I. P. 364.

Gollennesse was of opinion that there were only two ways of restoring the pepper trade of the Dutch. The first was to follow the market as the other merchants would do. The second was to adopt extreme measures by which they could compel the Rajas to observe the contracts. But if they were to follow the first policy, they need not have wasted so much blood and money in order to secure exclusive contracts. They need not have waged expensive wars for the maintenance of their political power. Having committed themselves to so much of heavy expenditure in Malabar, they could not afford to appear as ordinary competitors with the other European powers. As Gollennesse said "to follow the market was well nigh impossible because an ordinary merchant who had to defray no expenses of any importance was better off with 25% profit on pepper than the Hon'ble Company with 100% in as much as the latter had to bear the considerable burdens of so many establishments on the coast." The second alternative was even more hazardous. In compelling the Malabar kings to observe the contracts the Company was only getting itself involved in further wars and more expenditure. Even if they could defeat these princes in war there was no guarantee that they would keep the contract. Even if they could compel the princes, they could not coerce the people to submission on a question which involved definite financial loss for them. The system of pepper collection was two-fold—contract collection and collection through private persons. The Travancore Raja had entered into a contract with the Company in 1753 by which he promised to sell 3,000 candies out of his hereditary territories at the rate of Rs. 65 a candy and 2,000 candies out of his conquered territories at the rate of Rs. 55 per candy. The Company maintained that the Raja had the obligation to observe the contract as he had received "great favour and advantages" from the Company. "The Company did not stand in his way when he was making himself master of so many kings and fertile pepper lands" contends Moens, "from which he is now drawing great revenues not to speak of the expenses of a garrison and fortifications which we have to bear here in time of peace for the safety of His Highness." But none of these was a weighty consideration for the Raja to keep the contract. He never fulfilled his obligation and was carrying on his trade with the English and other merchants.



When Hendrick Zwaardercroon was the Commander, he issued an order that the pepper in Malabar should be sold at a premium of 25%. His object was to prevent the smuggling trade. As the buyers could get pepper at a low price from the Company there would be no profit in the smuggling trade. But the Dutch authorities in Holland considered this too low and therefore fixed the premium as 50% in 1725. In 1733 it was raised to 100%. But the result of this increase in the premium was an increase in the smuggling trade. "The greater the premium of pepper, the greater were the profits of smuggling." However much the Dutch tried to prevent this "contraband trade" it only increased as years went by. Usually this trade was carried through sea, but when the Dutch fortified and garrisoned their outposts in the sea, the "contraband" trade was carried through land.

Before the arrival of the Dutch in Malabar there was no such practice as a "monopoly of trade" in this country. In the time of the Portuguese, trade was carried on between the Company and the people and the Rajas were only the mediators between the two. But the Dutch introduced the ingenious system of trade monopoly and the Rajas became parties to it. But as we have already observed, even though the Rajas were parties to the contract they never fulfilled the contract.

The important articles of trade next to pepper mentioned by Gollennesse are piece-goods, cardamoms, cotton, areca, sandal, cowries, chanks, curcuma (saffron), indigo, timber, lime and bricks, rice, coir, fuses, hides, cocoanut oil, salt, charcoal and fire wood. He also includes slaves as objects of trade. Kottar in Travancore was an important place for piece-goods. Cardamom was mainly produced at Kottayam in the kingdom of the Kolastiri and this trade had been mainly carried on by the English in those parts. Sandalwood was purchased at Canara and sent to Batavia for the China trade. Cowries were brought from the vessels which came from the Maldives and they were sold mainly at Calicut. The Dutch were planning for an exhaustive indigo cultivation in the Mangat country and the land of the Anji Caimals. Special seedlings were brought from Ceylon, Surat and other parts. The main centres of timber trade were Porakkad and Kayamkulam. The supply of rice in Malabar

was too meagre and therefore the Dutch were importing rice from Canara. Coir was mainly brought from Parur and Cochin. Fuses were prepared at Kayamkulam. But after Kayamkulam was captured by the Travancore Raja, fuses were made at Cochin. Malabar was a great export centre of hides. Hides were generally exported to Ceylon. Cocoanut oil was mainly supplied by Cochin. Salt was manufactured at Vendurti in large quantities. Charcoal was burnt at Paponetty.

Most of the Dutch trade was done with the 'bombaras' which came from Sind, Cutch and other northern regions. Besides the 'bombaras' there were native vessels which came from Basrur and Mangalore and other ports. There were native vessels trading with cochin from countries of the south like Quilon, Anjengo, Tengapatnam and Colachel. Native vessels also came from Manapar, Tuticorin, Kilkare, Coilpatnam, Jaffnapatnam and Negapatam. Ships, even from China, visited the Cochin port. All these vessels brought to Cochin the things which the places they come from produced.

The Muscat bombaras brought dates, sulphur, incense, asafoetida, puvata, Manjalca, or gall nuts, sticks of liquorice, shark-fins, fish-gut, kismis, almonds, pastasjes (pistachios?) rose water, glass beads, small alcatives (persian carpets or table cloths) ormus-salt, saleb (a medicinal timber), mirragomma, alwe, aurom, pigmentum, tutia (a kind of medicine for eye complaint), small pearls, chalties, blue stone, gum arabic and salt petre.

The other bombaras brought capoe, cotton thread, canvas, coarse spreads, coarse ehintzes, wollen clothes, combars, gessiapats, niquniasses, ulwa seed, coriander seed, cummin seed, mustard seed, catjang, grain, cardels (a kind of edible small bean), borax, ajuvan or onion seed, putjack root, jerzelin seed, and jerzelin oil, amenica oil, mustard oil, paparcar, fennel seed, urida beans, assasalie or garden cress seed, sal armoniac, addividigam root, trivetty or tricolpaconna, ammekoron root, kargorony root, aretta root, wheat, ani seed, corkeljan (a medicine for horses), covy or sandal earth, gall nuts, coffee of the Mocha kind, soap and chanks.

The imports from Rajpur were catu, raw lac, wood, salt, coriander, covy or sandal earth, urida, onion and salt petre.



The imports from Barssalore, Mangalore and Nanjeswaram were rice, atjang, horse beans, jerselin seed, urida beans, sandalwood, white dry areca, fresh areca, chelas, roomals, canjau leaves and Jager kana.

The imports from Cannanore, Tellicherry, Vatakara, Tanur and Ponnany were cardamoms, country-iron, sappan wood, pulenjica beans, iris root, garlic, aretta root, tobacco, javely, white and black root, raw wax, chikney areca and fresh areca.

Piece goods, tamarind, jager sugar and coir fibre were the principal products from Quilon, Anjengo, Tengapatnam and Colachel.

From Manapar, Tuticorin, Kilcare and Coilpatnam were imported diverse cotton goods as spreads, chintzes, frocks, stockings, cambays, handkerchiefs, catjes, tuppatties, chelas, roomals and also tobacco, salt, onions, writing olas, and carpetty or native sugar.

The imports from Acheen were Dividar wood, sappan wood, benzoin, patjapat, camphor, unworked aguil wood, white dried areca, gatte gamber, sago and rattans.

From China were imported silk of diverse colours, raw silk, silk stuffs, lanquin sugar, spialuter, quick silver, camphor, alum, radix China, cantjore root, porcelain, tea, boeyans, iron pans, anise flower, castor, arsenic pitch, copper articles, silk and cotton stockings, preserved ginger, quipersols, different kinds of paper and pedermany (a kind of medicine for eye complaints.)

The principal exports to Muscat were sugar, spices, spialuter, iron, steel, lead, tin, pepper, sandalwood, cardamoms, wooden articles, dry ginger, curcuma, nerbale beans, castor, porcelain, rice, cocoanuts with and without husks, agel wood, benzoin, camphor, clove-pepper, patjapat, palcatcherry piece goods, cowries, coir fibre and ropes.

The exports to other parts were sugar, spices, Japanese copper, spialuter, lead, tin, quick silver, camphor, raw chinese silk, sappan wood, alum, pepper cardamoms, Bengal silk stuffs, Palcatchery chialauw, Bengal long pepper and roots of the same, triatroot, porcelain, clove pepper, pitch, dry ginger, curcuma, cocoanuts with and without husks, wooden articles, cuva root

and flour, marmanjel, nerbale beans, coir fibre and ropes, janaparil or little whet-stones, fruta-canjarah, fruta-mattapesy, sollenjan or wild ginger, calliatour wood and dry areca.

The exports to Rajpur were spices, sugar, alum, spiaulter, cuva, cocoanuts with and without the husk.

The exports to Barssalore and Mangalore were spices, sugar, Japanese copper, tin and lead, steel, spiaulter, Bengal long pepper and roots thereof, Bengal silk clothes, Colletje and Manapur blue salempuries and white caatjes, Malacca pitch, Dividar wood, colliatour wood, benzoin, camphor, Chinese silk stuffs, quick-silver, vermilion, Chinese iron pans, cantjore root, radix China, raw silk, alum, copera, oil, tamarind, honey, dry ginger and cammelmas.

The exports to Cannanore, Tellicherry, Vadacara, Calicut, Tanur, and Ponnai were spices, sugar, Japanese copper, lead, tin, spiaulter, camphor, benzoin, dividar wood, Malacca pitch, calliatour wood, Manapar and Colachel piece goods, tamarind, Manapar onions, writing olas, jager kana, raw lac, armozines, Batavia arrack, Ceylon arrack, Cochin arrack, corcapully fruit, sole and upper leather, magadotties, Bengal salt petre, clove pepper, Malacca long pepper, cocoanut oil, commelmas, atty and tripilly fruit.

To Quilon, Anjengo, Tengapatnam and Colachel were exported spices, sugar, Japanese copper, iron, lead, tin, spiaulter, steel and cotton.

The principal exports to Manapar, Tuticorin, Kilkare, Coilpatnam and Jaffnapatanam, Negapatnam and Aacheen were chikney areca, coir fibre, copra and cocoanuts, nerbale, sandalwood, pulenjica, dry ginger, curcuma, fruta canjarah and angelica boards.

The exports to China were sandal, pepper, cotton, putjuc roof, gummamira, alwe, olibanum gum, sulphur, salt petre, timber, catu, asafoetida, fish teeth, elephant tusks, shark fins; fish gut, abada horn, arabian gum, Surat cambay, gingham coverlets, combars, lead and tih.

The trade was mostly carried on on the exchange system. The Company used to buy these articles and keep them in large



stock. There were local merchants in the service of the Company to arrange for the purchase and sale of these articles. The Dutch had to battle with many difficulties for a smooth trade in Malabar. The havoc done by pirates on the sea was always causing them anxiety. The scarcity of money among the merchants also interrupted their trade. Formerly the Company's trade had suffered very much because of the private trade carried on by the Commanders and chiefs of the settlement. The Commanders used to carry on their private trade either in person or through private agents and they were making enormous profits out of it. But the Batavian Government issued orders strictly forbidding private trade by the Commanders. As a compensation for their loss they were given 3% brokerage on the Company's merchandise. C. L. Senff, Moens' predecessor in Malabar, complained that the compensation was too poor and therefore he should be allowed to carry on private trade. When Moens became the Commander a new arrangement was devised by which the brokerage was raised from 3% to 5%. It was left to Moens' option to have private trade or this commission. But Moens realised that "if an administrator was allowed to do for himself what he was bound to do for the Company, viz., to trade, self-interest might at times so lead him astray, that he would see first to his own interests and to the Company's only afterwards."

Even though private trade for personal profits was given up, Moens tried a system of private trade on behalf of the Company which was to enjoy the profits thereof. This was found to be highly profitable. Moens was encouraged to take up this system of private trade on behalf of the Company by the report of Mr. Schreuder, an ex-councillor of Cochin. Schreuder stated in his secret considerations: "The Honourable Company cannot only do everything that private persons can do, but even much more, if it is served faithfully and a man applied to its affairs the same amount of judgment of reflection as he would to his own." Moens wanted to bring this suggestion into practice by "serving the Company faithfully applying to its affairs the same amount of judgment and reflection as he would to his own." Moens takes great pride in having carried on this trade very profitably. A profit of Rs. 54,722-9-0 was made on powder and candy sugar alone. The total profits amounts to Rs. 126,342-5-0.

We may notice one general rule about the prospects of the Company's trade in Malabar. It was prosperous when the Company's influence among the Malabar princes was strong ; it declined when the Company's power declined.

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## CHAPTER XVI

### ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM OF THE DUTCH EAST INDIA COMPANY

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THE Dutch who stepped into the shoes of the Portuguese in Malabar excelled their predecessors in many respects. We have already referred to the liberal policy of religious toleration followed by the Dutch as contrasted with the rigorous policy of conversion pursued by the Portuguese. It was in the field of administration that the Dutch showed their definite superiority. The Portuguese Company was ill-organised and thoroughly inefficient. It was organised on the worst pattern of medieval feudalism and proved to be a colossal failure in the East. The Dutch East India Company, on the other hand, had in it all the marks of a modernised democratic State. "Government by Councils", the characteristic feature of European Government, was the main principle of the Dutch administration in the East also. Unlike the Portuguese Company, there was no unnecessary interference and no arbitrary restrictions from the home Government. The Dutch Company in the East was practically a sovereign body, devising its own rules and policies suiting the circumstances of the country and age. Grose in his voyage to the East Indies observes: "One of the reasons why the Dutch East India Company flourishes and is become more rich and powerful than all the others is its being absolute and invested with a kind of sovereignty and dominion more especially over the many ports, provinces and colonies it possesses." Even though the Company enjoyed the patronage of the State, it was never hampered in any of its activities by the authorities of the



State. The main strength of the Dutch East India Company was that it had a very sound system of organisation, a system which deserved the admiration of all western commercial concerns. The organisation of the Dutch Company was considered the model for the English East India Company and we can find the close resemblance between the two in almost every detail. The English publicly acknowledged the superiority and merit of the Dutch administrative system and deliberately copied its principles. Dutch officers were taken into the services of the Company so that their system of administration could be more effectively practised. In 1687 Governor Yale of Madras sent the Directors of the English Company "a book containing the Dutch methods" and commenting on the book the directors made the following observation :—"As there appears in this (the book) great wisdom and policy we recommend to you the frequent reading and consideration of what is contained in these papers, which the oftener you read, the more you will discover the wisdom of these persons who contrived those methods.....Our design in the whole is to get up the Dutch Government among the English in the Indies (than which a better cannot be invented) for the good of posterity and to put us upon an equal footing of power with them to offend or defend or enlarge the English dominions and unite the strength of our nation under one entire and absolute command subject to us, as we are and ever shall be most dutifully to our own sovereign." The only distinction the English wanted to make was that of nomenclature. They wanted to have their English terms, viz., Attorney General instead of Fiscal, Alderman instead of sepin, Burgesses instead of Burghers, serjeants instead of Baillies, President and Agent instead of Commander, Director or Commissary

The organisation of the Company in Holland was in the form of a loose confederation. The different 'chambers,' at the various posts formed the units of this confederation. There were "chambers" at Amsterdam, Middleburg, Rotterdam, Delft, Hoorn and Enkhuizen and each of these chambers had its own ships for trade with the East. The chambers kept their own accounts of the ships they were sending to the East. The governing body of the Dutch East India Company was a board of directors consisting of 60 members. Amsterdam had the largest representation in the board; one third of the directors

were chosen by the Amsterdam chamber. Middleburg selected one fifth of the total number of Directors. Rotterdam, delft, Hoorn, and Enkhuizen chose seven members each to the board. The supreme administrative body was the Council of Seventeen—usually known as the "Seventeen." Eight out of the seventeen members were appointed by the Amsterdam chamber which was the predominant unit. The Council had its sessions for six years at Amsterdam and for two years at Middleburg. (The council of Seventeen was often referred to as the Amsterdam Council). The Council arranged for the sail of ships fixing the number each chamber had to send and also fixing the dates for their sail. The council met only three times a year, but there were special committees of the council for carrying on the routine business of administration.

The chief officer in charge of the administration of the Company's Eastern possessions was the Governor General. He was assisted by a council of nine members, each one to be in charge of a separate department. For example, there was one commercial expert, one naval expert, one chief army officer, one advocate general and jurist and one director general for the factories. The Governors of Moluccas, Amboyna, Banda and Coromandel were the other members of the Council. The Governor General enjoyed almost sovereign powers in the Council. The Director General was the officer next in importance to the Governor General. All questions relating to the eastern trade were decided by the Governor General's Council without being influenced by the instructions from the Home Government. The Home Government not being in direct acquaintance with the circumstances of the East usually allowed sovereign authority to the Governor General and Council for all affairs relating to the Company's administration in these parts. The membership of the Governor General's council was not fixed as nine. In some years there were only eight members, four of whom would be with the Governor General at Batavia. The Governor General had always a casting vote.

Calletti treats the different services of the Dutch East India Company under six headings political, ecclesiastical, military, naval, medical and artisan.

There were various grades in the polical services, e. g., apprentice, junior assistant, assistant book keeper, under



merchant, merchant, upper merchant. In each settlement there was a Governor or a Commander or a Director as the head of this hierarchy of officers. These officers were entitled to certain commissions and allowances besides their regular salary. Their salaries per month were as follows :—

Governor	200	Guilders
Malabar Cammander	150—180	„
Upper merchant	80—100	„
Merchant	60—70	„
Under merchant	40	
Book keeper	30	
Assistant	24—26	„
Junior Assistant	16—20	„
Apprentice	9—10	„

The officers received allowances for lodging and provisions, which almost amounted to their respective salaries. In Malabar there was a Commander in charge of the settlements on the coast. From the writings of Moens, we know how the Commanders before his time were making enormous profits by private trade. But that system was disallowed and the Commanders were given 5% commission on the profits of the Company. The salary of the Commander was no doubt not very attractive. But his total income including all his commissions and allowances amounted to nearly 3,000 pounds a year.

The different fortresses, military settlements and factories in Malabar were under the supreme control of the Commander at Cochin. At Cochin, the head quarters of the Dutch in Malabar, there was a second-in-council to assist the Commander. In the time of Gollennesse there were six under-merchants, 15 book keepers, 24 assistants, and 19 apprentices. Thus there were 66 members in Cochin belonging to the Political service. At Quilon there were 9 members of the political service and at Cannanore four. There were residents at Porakkad, Ponnani and other places. But many of these establishments were reduced considerably and in the time of Moens there were only 43 officers of the Political service at Cochin, two at Quilon and one each at Cranganore, Kayamkulam and Porakkad.

1. Moens was given the title of "Governor" being an extra-ordinary member of the Council of India.

The constitution of the political service in Malabar closely resembled that of Batavia. The Commander was assisted by a council of nine. Here also, the membership of the council was not strictly fixed. Sometimes there were nine members in the council, some times only seven. The main departments under the charge of the councillors were the warehouses and store house, the treasury, the post office, the trade office and the political secretariat. The members of the council were styled as "Honourable." There were subordinate officers in the political service called "administrators." In the factories also there were political committees to assist the chief officer. Many of the Dutch settlements were under officers who had the rank of "under merchants."

In the ecclesiastical service of the Company the 'Preacher' was the highest officer. The Preacher was also the head of the educational department as education and religion were not separated in those days. There were many deacons under the preacher and they were expected to carry on some missionary activity. The Preachers were generally proficient in the vernacular and Portuguese, as a knowledge of these was highly necessary for religious instruction. The Preacher's salary was 90—120 guilders, the deacon's 24—36 guilders and the school master's 7—15. All these officers received allowances for house rent, fire wood and food besides their salaries. In Cochin there were one preacher<sup>1</sup> and two deacons.

The chief officers of the military service were a serjeant major and a chief engineer with their head quarters at Batavia. Below them there were captains, captains-lieutenant, lieutenants, ensigns, serjeants, corporals and privates. There were superior officers in the army like Brigadier, Colonel, Lieutenant-Colonel and Major. Their salaries were as follows:—

Brigadier	..	350	guilders.
Colonel	..	250	"
Lt. Colonel	..	200	"
Major	..	150	"
Serjeant Major	..	120	"
Captain	..	80—100	guilders.

1. Visscher was a preacher of the Dutch in Cochin during the years 1717—1723.



Captain Lieutenant	..	70	guilders.
Lieutenant	..	50—60	„
Ensign	..	40	„
Serjeant	..	20	„
Corporal	..	14	„
Private	..	9	„

The salary for the Chief Engineer was 140 guilders a month.

The Chief Military Officer for the Dutch garrisons in Malabar had usually the rank of a Captain. There were under the Captain one Captain-Lieutenant, four Lieutenants and six Ensigns. These officers were in charge of the European armies in Malabar. There was one Captain assisted by two Lieutenants and one Ensign for the other armies of the Dutch in Malabar (Malayan, Eurasian and native troops.) There were also one Captain and one Lieutenant in charge of the artillery.

The Chief Officers of the naval department were Commander, Captain-at-sea, Captain-Lieutenant-at-sea, Skipper and Lieutenant. Their salaries were as follows:—

Commander	120	guilders.
Captain-at-sea	100	„
Captain Lieutenant-at-sea	80	„
Skipper	60	„
Lieutenant	48	„

There were other naval officers like chief maritime officer, port officer and master attendant who were in charge of the ports. At Cochin there was only one maritime officer who had the command of the port and the sea.

The Surgeon General with his headquarters at Batavia was the Chief Medical Officer. He was assisted by upper surgeons, surgeons and under surgeons. The salaries were as follows:—

Surgeon General	80	guilders.
Upper surgeons	45—63	„
Surgeons and under surgeons	14—30	„

In Malabar the Chief Medical Officer had the rank of an upper surgeon. There were many surgeons and under surgeons also in Malabar. In Cochin there were about 8–11 surgeons.

The chief officers of the Artisan service were the inspector of fortifications and superintendent of the press. There were many

subordinate officers of this department in Malabar employed for ship-building and fortification. There were also many smiths, carpenters, masons, etc., in the service of the Company.

The distinctive feature of the administration of the Dutch East India Company was "efficiency." The Dutch realised that "good management was of great importance to the Company and that good servants of greater importance." Moens wrote: "Good service and good servants are bound up with one another as effect and cause. Hence, it is time beyond dispute that where the best servants are, there things are done best." Therefore the Dutch always took care to secure efficient officers for the service of their Company. Liberal salaries were given to their servants in order to ensure efficiency of work. Still there seem to have been many "deserters" from the company's service. Moens speaks with great regret about the desertions of De Lannoy and Duyvenschot. While he does not appreciate their action, he deploras the circumstances that led to it. Even though they were men of real merit, no recognition was given to their services in the Company and it was their discontent that persuaded them to remain in the services of Travancore. Gollennesse knew that it was impossible "to make all the crooked sticks straight." Still he advised his successor to "remember the deserving when opportunity offered and to recommend them to the Right Worshipfuls." Moens also pleaded for giving attractive encouragements to the servants of the Company lest the Company should miss the benefits of their talents. But he believed that much depended on the chief of the settlements. "For if he sets a good example in everything," says Moens, "and himself does nothing which the whole world may not know and so need not be afraid of any one, is conscientious in his work, treats everyone severely or kindly according to his merits, and before all has a head on his shoulders, then those who would like to commit malpractices will think twice before doing so."

Besides Europeans, the Company had in its services large numbers of Topasses, Lascorins and Mukhavas. The Topasses were formerly in the services of the Portuguese. After the arrival of the Dutch the majority of them had taken up services with them. Most of the gardens and fields of the Company were rented out to the Topasses. They were also employed in the ship-building yard and in the smithy. Some served as



carpenters, some as soldiers and some as interpreters. The service of interpreters was highly necessary for the Dutch especially when they were dealing with criminal cases in the courts. The great defect about the native interpreters was that they could not understand the Dutch language clearly and distinctly. When a native witness was to be examined in a court of law, it was necessary that the clerk of the court should understand the evidence without any mistake. But often many grave mistakes were committed by the native interpreters who translated the vernacular into Dutch. The Dutch Commanders were always complaining about the want of efficient interpreters who should have not only an "idea clara" but also an "idea distincta." Moens keenly felt the difficulty in employing incompetent native interpreters and suggested that Europeans should take pains to learn the vernacular tongue. He suggested that the small European boys who came to Malabar along with their parents should be taught the Vernacular and Dutch languages thoroughly with a view to making them interpreters.

The Topasses had certain exclusive privileges as servants of the Company, e. g., they alone could sell refreshments to the Company's ships. Gollennesse was frequently complaining about the disloyalty of the Topasses who were regularly deserting the Company's service. By the regulation of September 26, 1739 the Dutch authorities were persuading the deserters to come back to the Company's services. A general pardon was assured to the deserters; still it was not sufficient inducement for their return.

The Lascorins who were employed in the services of the Company were Christians who accepted the Romish faith in the days of the Portuguese. They served the Company mainly as soldiers. Gollennesse says that about 300 Lascorins deserted the Company's service and took with them their muskets also.

The Mukhavas (Christian fishermen) were largely employed as coolies by the Dutch for the construction of fortresses and buildings. Some of them were recruited as soldiers also.

#### JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

The Dutch aimed at the establishment of a high standard of justice in their possessions. There was a court of justice at Cochin presided by the Second-in-Council and Chief Administrator. Most of the members of the political council were members of the

Bench and they settled all civil and criminal cases. There was also a subordinate court at Cochin dealing with small cases. It was presided over by a member of the political council.

Formerly the Chief of the settlement—the Commander—used to be the president of the court of justice also. But later the judicial functions were vested in the Second-in-Council. This change was brought about after the trial and punishment of the Ceylon Governor Perter Vyyst in 1732. The Commanders were strictly forbidden from interfering in the affairs of judicial administration. They were to approve of the decisions of the Court in criminal cases with the advice of their Council. If they could not approve of the sentence they could stay its execution till the final decision of the case came from Batavia. But even though the Commander was formally forbidden from interfering in the affairs of the court, it was his duty as chief of the settlement to see that the administration of justice was properly done. Moens gives nine important suggestions for the consideration of the Commander in this respect.

(1) "When appointing judges of the court of justice, he should take special care and pay much attention to selecting the best men available at the station.

(2) He should make the members of this court understand the delicacy, importance and responsibility of their office..... that a judge must exercise neither excessive severity nor misplaced leniency, but be nothing more than an executor of the laws which he must weigh with the acts done or the facts of the suit according to the circumstances of each particular case.

(3) The Chief should not listen to the complaints of litigants who have lost their case in the civil court. That would only encourage people to show disrespect to the court of law.

(4) The Chief can be considerate towards the loser in a civil case by helping him to file an appeal to the proper judicial authorities.

(5) If the judge for some reason refuses the loser permission to appeal, the Chief may then make the loser understand that a way of appeal is still left him, namely, by making application to the judge (*ad quem*) for permission to appeal.

(6) The Chief may advise the judge to clarify his judgment if it is unintelligible without prejudicing the former judgment.



(7) The Chief may recommend prompt hearing and disposal of cases for avoiding delay.

(8) The Chief should not grant any 'committimus' except in cases which the Supreme authority has reserved to itself.

(9) In criminal cases he should take care to make a distinction between crimes which directly concern the Company's own interests and all other crimes."

Usually the Commanders did not interfere in the regular course of judicial administration. But the formal consent of the Commander was necessary for the execution of the sentences. If the Commander disagreed with the judgment in any particular case, he could stay the execution of the sentence and refer the matter for the final decision of the Batavian Council which was the supreme authority in everything. But there were no occasions for such interference from the Batavian Council. Like the other branches of administration, the judicial administration of the Dutch was also perfect and sound.

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## CONCLUSION

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The Dutch period covering more than a century and a quarter was of great political importance as it witnessed certain fundamental changes in the political system of the country. Even though the Dutch interfered frequently in the internal politics of the country, their history is not stained by any acts of cruelty or barbarism. Comparing the Portuguese and the Dutch administrations of Malabar, Mr. Panikker says.<sup>1</sup> "Unlike the Portuguese, the Dutch never claimed that they had conquered India or any portion of it. As their pretensions were less and their desire to do profitable trade evident, they caused less friction and created less trouble than the Portuguese.....Calculating, matter-of-fact, and well-trained in the doubtful art of diplomacy, the Dutch presented a striking contrast to the arrogant and incompetent Portuguese whose finances were always on the brink of bankruptcy, but whose pretensions were never

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1 Malabar and the Dutch, K. M. Panikkar, P. 167-168.

less than those of universal dominion and Empire." The haughty and thoroughly selfish policy of the Portuguese had made them extremely unpopular with the princes and people of Malabar. It must be said to the credit of the Dutch that they were not hated by any section of the people of Malabar in any period of their stay in the country. The Dutch had always viewed with disapproval the high-handed policy of the Portuguese in Malabar. We find in the writings of all the Dutch administrators severe criticism of the Portuguese methods and policy. The Dutch always took pride in considering themselves better civilized than the Portuguese who, according to them, were no better than barbarians. The name of the Portuguese had become a by-word for cruelty and even to-day the word 'Paranki' is used in Malayalam to refer to barbarism. The Dutch rule appeared as a relieving substitute for the harsh reign of the Portuguese. The scorn and contempt the Dutch had for the Portuguese policy is clearly evident from the writings of Nieuhoff and others. When Nieuhoff was sent to Quilon, Travancore and other parts to arrange for trade agreements with the native rulers, the ministers of Travancore accused him for the harsh treatment the Dutch had accorded to the Queen of Quilon. He asked Nieuhoff "whether the Dutch would do less than the Portuguese had done." Nieuhoff replied: "If we should follow the foot-steps of the Portuguese we must be guilty likewise of the same enormities, in murdering, plundering, etc., things not customary with us, the intention of our Company being to maintain every one in his right, and establish a free commerce without interruption." As we have already stated, the Dutch came to Malabar as merchants and wanted only to remain as merchants. The role the Company played as a sovereign authority was only an accident in its history. But the Portuguese came to Malabar as merchants, masters and missionaries. They wanted to be all the three at the same time and deliberately sought to achieve this object.

The Dutch rule in Malabar did not leave any permanent marks as the Portuguese did. The Portuguese language is even to-day known to some parts of Malabar and many Portuguese words have crept into the Vernacular. The religion of the Portuguese continues in all vigour and force on the Malabar coast and the converts to their faith remain faithful to their religion.



The most indelible mark of the Portuguese rule in Malabar is the mixed caste of Topasses who even to-day follow the old Portuguese traditions. But viewed from the standpoint of leaving permanent results, the Dutch rule was very unimportant. It was only a passing cloud. The Dutch language is nowhere spoken, the Dutch traditions are nowhere in vogue, and even the Dutch religion has disappeared from the country. But the Dutch are remembered by the Malayalees for their liberal and large-hearted policy. The Dutch in general upheld the cause of honesty and justice. They never allowed their servants to commit any malpractices in the country or to be cruel towards the local inhabitants. They always paid due respect to the Malabar princes and chieftains and were very polite in their relations with them. Even though they were zealous champions of the Protestant faith, they never allowed religious fanaticism to override their sense of duty. They showed great respect to the traditional ceremonies and religious observances of the Malayalees. They even considered it their duty to protect the religious rights of the local inhabitants. We have referred to the strong attitude taken by Governor Angelbeck against the slaughter of cows. This is sufficient indication of their concern and respect for the religion and beliefs of the natives. In all these things the Dutch offer a brilliant contrast to the Portuguese. Once a Dutch man asked a Portuguese priest at Goa, "When do you imagine the sway of my countrymen will melt like that of yours in India?" Promptly came the reply: "As soon as the wickedness of your nation shall exceed that of my people." But students of Dutch history in Malabar know perfectly well that the wickedness of the Dutch was never the reason for their disappearance.

We have referred to some of the humanitarian activities of the Dutch in Malabar like the Orphanage and the Leper Asylum. The Dutch spent liberal sums for the hospital, and many of the Company's officers and their wives took keen interest in these charitable institutions. Some Commanders had made themselves very popular with the local inhabitants during their stay in the country. Some of them could converse in Malayalam without difficulty and took a keen interest in the local traditions and history of the country. The Dutch administrators, even though mainly interested in commerce, were keen observers of things and men and critical students of history. The Memoirs of Moens

and the letters of Visscher are priceless treasure—houses of information about Malabar and its history. Van Rhee-de's 'Hortus Malabaricus' has immortalised the memory of the Dutch relations with Malabar. Van Rhee-de made an extensive study of the vegetable products of the country. Special agents were sent to the different highlands and forests of the country to collect all available specimens of plants. He classified them into different groups and gave their distinctive names in the Sanskrit, Malayalam and Latin languages. A comprehensive report about the distinctive usefulness of these plants and also their sketches were included in his valuable book. It took many years for the book to be completed and edited. The first volume was printed in 1686 at Amsterdam and the twelfth (last) volume in 1703. Van Rhee-de had the able assistance of many Malayalee and Portuguese scholars in the production of this comprehensive book. The names of the plants in Malayalam were given by the Konkani- es like Ranka bhattan, Vinayaka Pandithar and Appu bhattan and an Ezhava by name Itty Achuthan. The sketches of these plants were rendered in the Portuguese language drawn by the Carmelite Priest, Mathaeus at Cochin. The details about these plants were rendered in the Portuguese language by Emmanuel Carnerio and they were translated into latin by Herman Van Douep the Government Secretary. The name of the plant is given below every sketch in Malayalam and Latin. Probably Malayalam types were for the first time made in Europe for this purpose.

The Dutch rule in general was conducive to the development of trade and industries. The Dutch gave a fillip to the pepper trade of Malabar and gave wide advertisement to Malabar pepper in the world markets. Commanders like Gollennessee and Moens introduced new methods for the improvement of cotton fabrics. New systems of dyeing and printing were introduced into the country by these Commanders. The Dutch also rendered valuable service to the Malabar princes in giving training to their soldiers in new methods of warfare. The Dutch popularised western weapons of warfare and their example was followed by many local princes. Some of the Dutch officers were taken into the services of the Native States. We have seen how the services of De Lannoy were useful for the training up of the Travancore army and the construction of the fortifications. The



engineering skill of the Dutch was made use of by the local Rajas on many occasions.

One important point that should be remembered about the Dutch rule of Malabar is that, their power declined not because of the decay of their administration but because of the rise of certain circumstances over which they had no control. Usually the influence of a particular power disappears when it declines of its own accord. But that was not the case of the Dutch in Malabar. The Dutch administration was efficient and sound from beginning till end. There was no deterioration in the system of the management of the Company's affairs. On the other hand, it is worth while to note that the Dutch took special care and attention for securing efficiency of administration towards the latter part of their reign in Malabar. But, their disappearance was due to certain outside factors. The first factor was the rise of Marthanda Varma and the consequent progress of Travancore as a powerful State. The next was the invasion of the Mysoreans. The last was the strong rivalry of the English. Marthanda Varma dealt the death blow to the Dutch Company, the Mysoreans hastened its death, the English effected it.



## APPENDIX I

## LIST OF DUTCH COMMANDERS AT COCHIN

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Hustaart	..	Captured Cochin in 1663.
Peter de Bitter	..	} Commissioners in charge of the fort.
Charles Valkenburg	..	
Ludolff Colster	..	First Governor.
Hendrick Adriaan Van Rheede	..	1673—1677
Jacob Lobo	..	1677—1678
Martin Huysman	..	1680—1681
Gulmer Vorsbury	..	1684—1686
Isaac Van Dielen	..	1687—1693
Swaardekroon	..	1693—1698
Peter Cocsaart (acting)	..	1698
Magnes Wickelman	..	1698—1701
W. Moerman	..	1705—1709
Barent Ketel	..	1709—1716
J. Hertenberg	..	1717—1724
De. Jong	..	1724—1731
A. Maten	..	1731—1735
J. S. Van Gollennesse	..	1735—1743
Siersma	..	1743—1748
C. Stevens	..	1748—1750
Le Haye	..	1750—1751
C. Cunes	..	1751—1757
C. De Jong	..	1757—1761
G. Wayerman	..	1761—1764
C. Breekpot	..	1764—1769
C. L. Snett	..	1769—1771
Adrian Moens	..	1771—1781
Van Angelbeck	..	1781—1793
Van Spall	..	1793—1795

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## APPENDIX II

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS RELATING TO THE HISTORY OF THE  
DUTCH IN MALABAR

Year.	Month.	Event.
1594		Houtman organised a sail to the East.
1595	April 2	A fleet of four vessels under Houtman sailed to the east.
1601		Sixteen Dutch ships sailed to the East.
1602	Mar. 20	Formation of the Dutch East India Company.
1608	Oct. 13	Dutch signed a treaty with the Zamorin for "the ruin and destruction of the Portuguese."
1610		Arrival of the Dutch in Ceylon.
1619		Establishment of Dutch power in Batavia.
1658	Dec. 29	Seized the Portuguese fortress at Quilon.
1661	Feb. 10	Arrival of the Dutch at Ayakotta.
1661	Mar. 12	Paliath Achen entered into an agreement with the Dutch on Board the 'Muscaat boom.'
1661		The Dutch made an unsuccessful attack on Cochin. Dutch captured Quilon and Cranganore.
1662	Feb.	The Dutch took the palace of the Ranee of Cochin and made her prisoner.
1662	Oct. 25	The Dutch forces returned to Cochin under General Hustaart.
1662	Nov.	Van Goens joined the Dutch at Cochin.

Year.	Month.	Event.
1663	Jan. 8	Cochin capitulated to the Dutch.
1663	Mar. 20	The Dutch concluded a treaty with the Raja of Cochin who consented to become their vassal.
1667		The Dutch possessions in Malabar and on the western coast were placed under the Cochin command.
1680		Negotiations with the Portuguese for the exchange or sale of the Catholic institutions.
1689		Adoption into the Cochin Raja's family.
1691	Sep. 10	Chettwaye given to the Zamorin by the Dutch.
1697		Reduced the fortifications at Cochin, Cranganore, Cannanore and Quilon.
1701 to 1710		War between the Dutch and the Zamorin.
1710	Jan.	Raja of Cranganore reinstated in his original possessions.
1714		Dispute between the Dutch and Zamorin over Chettwaye.
1715		Zamorin invaded Cochin.
1717		Peace concluded between the Dutch and the Zamorin.
1739		Raja of Quilon died and his territories amalgamated with Kayamkulam.
1742		Dutch fort at Quilon attacked by Travancore forces—Travancore troops beaten off.
1753	Oct. 15	Cochin Raja met the Dutch ambassador at Mavelikara where they attempted to negotiate a peace with Travancore.



Year.	Month,	Event.
1753	Aug. 15	Treaty of Mavelikara between Travancore and the Dutch.
1757		300 European and 17,000 coloured troops arrived at Cochin from Batavia.
1757 to 1758		Raja of Cochin and the Dutch formed an alliance to drive out the Zamorin.
1758		The Dutch relieved the Chettwaye fort. The Travancore lines constructed.
1762		The Raja of Travancore defeated the Zamorin and restored to the Cochin Raja his lost possessions.
1766		Hyder invaded Malabar.
1766	April	Dutch Commissioners met Hyder at Calicut to assert their rights and privileges.
1775		Travancore purchased from the Dutch certain territories.
1776		Tippu took Cranganore and Ayroor.
1776	Nov. 13	The Dutch fort at Chettwaye was compelled to surrender to the Mysoreans.
1778	Jan. 8	The Dutch took the palace of the Cranganore Raja.
1778	Mar. 3	The Mysoreans attacked the Cranganore Palace and compelled the Dutch to retire to their fort.
1789		The Dutch sold the fort of Cranganore to the Travancore Raja.
1789	Aug.	Cranganore and Palliport sold by the Dutch to Travancore.
1790	April	Tippu seized the Travancore lines.

Year.	Month.	Event.
1790	Mar. 7	Tippu seized the Cranganore fort.
1790		Treaty between the Cochin Raja and the English.
1791		Disputes between the Dutch and the Cochin Raja over the Konkanyes.
1791		The Dutch handed over Chettwaye to the Zamorin.
1795	Feb. 24	The Dutch at Cochin ordered Stadtholder to admit the British to their possessions.
1795	Sep. 6	Conference at Cochin between Major Petrie, Mr. Stevenon and Van Spall.
1795	Oct 19	The fortress of Cochin surrendered to the English.

## APPENDIX III

Translation of the Agreement between Travancore and the Dutch for the purchase of the fort of Cranganore and the outpost of Ayakotta :—

“The enlightened and powerful king of Travancore, Wanji Bala Marthanda Rama Varma has sent his first State Minister and Dewan the respectable Kesava Pillai to the Most Worshipful John Gerrard Van Angelbeck, Governor of the Netherlands India and Commander of the forces of the Enlightened and Powerful Netherlands Company in the Malabar coast with the intention of purchasing from the Company the fort of Cranganore and the post of Ayakotta with the gardens and lands belonging thereto, having consulted and negotiated upon this it was adjusted upon the following conditions :—

“The Dewan Kesava Pillay has bought for his master and Hon. Governor Van Angelbeck on the part of the Company has sold to the king of Travancore for the just sum of three hundred thousand Surat Rupees, the fort of Cranganore and the post of



Ayakotta with the cannon and ordinance belonging to them as they now stand together with the Powder magazine though no small arms or any other effects and further the following lands and gardens:—

- The Muskaton island now leased for Rupees 390.
- The garden of Kilo Barki now leased for Rupees 115.
- The garden of Ascencio de Rosa leased for Rupees 190.
- The garden of Nagachetty leased for Rupees 164.
- The garden of Hendrick Meyer leased for Rupees 230.
- Garden of Babo Probo leased for Rupees 64.
- The garden of Alewyn leased for Rupees 310.
- The garden of Dama Moona leased for Rupees 1220.
- The garden of Arekel Ittooppoo leased for Rupees 199.
- The garden of Konoto Barki leased for Rupees 115.

“The purchase and sale is agreed to upon this condition that the King of Travancore shall not hinder the navigation of the river past the fort either to the Company’s vessels or in the vessels of the King of Cochin or their subjects whether the same be empty or loaded with rice, paddy or goods of any description as also all floats of wood and bamboos, etc., in a word all goods whatever without exception shall pass and repass free and without hindrance, nor shall there be any new tax put upon them.

“The King promises solemnly that the fire wood which must be brought from above Cranganore shall not be prevented on any pretext or taxed with any duty whatever, but on the contrary that he will assist all in his power to forward the firewood to Cochin by every possible means.

“The Lepers’ House at Palliport with the buildings, gardens and further ground belonging to it to remain in the full and free possession of the Company.

“The Romish Church at Cranganore and Ayakotta stand from ancient times under the Company and must remain under them. The King shall not interfere with the same or with the parsons. The Christians are to remain vassals of the Company and must not be burdened with any new tax.

“The Parson’s house at Palliport which the Governor erected and gave as a present to the church shall remain with the Church and no new burdens be permitted.

"The inhabitants shall keep their gardens and lands that they now possess as private property. Such as are Christians remain the same as the Catholic Christian vassals of the Company and must not thus under any pretence be burdened with additional taxes, only paying to the king the sum they formerly paid to the Company.

"The King promises before the delivery of the aforesaid fort and lands to make a payment in ready money of Rupees Fifty thousand and the four following years in equal instalments by furnishing an account of pepper annually to the amount of Rupees Sixty two thousand five hundred, for the better security of which and as lawful debtors the merchants David Rahaby, Ephraim Cohem and Ananda Setty bound themselves.

"All this negotiated in the fort of Cochin in the year Koilang nine hundred and seventy four and on the nineteenth of the month of Karkadagom or the thirty first July Seventeen eighty nine."

#### APPENDIX IV

##### THE TEXT OF THE TREATY BETWEEN THE DUTCH AND THE ENGLISH

###### *Propositions of the Dutch.*

The Governor in Council of Cochin proposes to Major Petrie of the 77th Regiment Commanding the detachments of the King's and E. I. C's. troops, to surrender this place on the 20th of this month and requests at the same time that all hostilities may cease.

###### *Article I*

The officers of the garrison and the military that have defended Cochin will with all the honours

###### *Answers of the English.*

The garrison of Cochin will be prisoners and the fort given over to His Great Britannic Majesty tomorrow noon at twelve O'clock at which time the Bay gate and the New gate shall be delivered over to such detachments as Major Petrie will order to take possession of them.

###### *Article I*

The garrison will march out as requested and lay down their arms on the Esplanade



of war march out from the Bay gate together with their arms, baggage, flying colours, beating of drums and lighted matches as also two cannons with their appurtenances.

*Article 2*

All officers and soldiers which are of the garrison of Cochin will with as little delay as possible be transported either to Batavia or Ceylon at the expense of the English Government in English vessels.

*Article 3*

The said officers and soldiers will take with them all their effects without their being liable to any search. Their servants and slaves; whilst those that are married will likewise be at liberty to take their families with them.

*Article 4*

The Governor, the members of Council and all servants of Police and Trade, Churchmen, Military and Naval, and other servants in the pay of the Dutch Company as also all the inhabitants of Cochin either Europeans, or natives will be at liberty to hold their persons and property movable and immovable merchandize and other effects without being therein molested or obstructed on any account whatsoever.

*Article 5*

Among the foregoing is also understood, regarding the liberty of the Factor and Resident of Porca, J. A. Scheits, who is now

when they must retire back as prisoners of war.

*Article 2*

Cannot be granted; about the garrison, it will be disposed of as the C-in-C may deem proper.

*Article 3*

Allowed, excepting with respect to slaves, a name unknown in the British dominions

*Article 4*

All private properties will be sacred.

*Article 5*

A reasonable time will be allowed him to settle his affairs, but he must be considered as a prisoner of war.

employed here in keeping the Company's mercantile books and he must be allowed to return to his station to receive his office.

*Article 6*

The Governor, the members of the Council and all servants of Police and Trade, the Churchmen and further servants in pay, will be at liberty to take their families, male and female, slaves and also their possessions either to Batavia or Ceylon and they will be granted there to at the expense of the British Government the necessary ships and transports.

*Article 7*

The funds belonging to the Orphan College and the poor House will not be confiscated or seized upon, they being money of orphans and the poor.

*Article 8*

All officers and servants, civil and political, of the Company who may wish to remain at this place as private individuals shall be granted the protection of the British flag.

*Article 9*

All marcantile articles, ammunitions, artillery goods, arms, provisions and other articles which belong to the Company and are found at this place will faithfully be made over according to a specific statement to the commissaries that will be appoin-

*Article 6*

This is replied to in the second article.

*Article 7*

The funds mentioned in this article will belong to His Great Britannic Majesty in so far that he will appoint persons over them for their management.

*Article 8*

All the inhabitants who are willing to remain and to take the oath of allegiance to His Great Britannic Majesty will in every respect be treated as British subjects.

*Article 9*

Everything mentioned in this article will be faithfully delivered over to such persons as Major Petrie will appoint hereafter to dispose there about agreeably to the direction of His Great Britannic Majesty.



ted to receive them and the specified list will in duplicate be duly delivered to Major Petrie.

*Article 10*

The fortifications, the Government houses, all magazines and other public buildings belonging to the Company will be kept as they are at present and not be demolished.

*Article 11*

The free exercise of the reformed religion, as usual in the Dutch Church, where divine service is performed, will be permitted.

*Article 12*

The convent at Verapolly and all other Romish churches, as also the Heathen temples will receive the protection, that they have hitherto enjoyed, under the Dutch Company.

*Article 13*

All Topasses (half-castes) and inland Christians as also the Banyans, silversmiths, painters, washers and shoe-makers who are subjects and vassals of the Dutch Company will retain their property and also all privileges and protections which they always had enjoyed of the said Company.

*Article 14*

All documents, charters, resolutions and other papers belonging to this Government will without any search being made of them be delivered over to the Gover-

*Article 10*

Regarding the fort of Cochin and all other public buildings they will be disposed of as the Commander-in-Chief or the Commanding Officer will think proper at the time.

*Article 11*

Allowed.

*Article 12*

The British Government everywhere protects religious exercises.

*Article 13*

Answered in the fourth and eighth articles.

*Article 14*

All Public Documents and papers must be delivered over to persons appointed to receive them, but Mr. Van Spall will have authenticated vouchers,

nor, Mr. Van Spall in order to be carried with him wherever he may be removed to.

*Article 15*

No one will occupy the Government House during (his) Mr. Van Spall's stay at Cochin, but he will remain in it, unmolested.

*Article 16*

In case of any English desert-ers being found in the garrison of Cochin, they will be pardoned.

*Article 17*

All public papers, Notarial or Secretariat deeds which may in the least be to the security of the possessions, belonging to the inhabitants of this place will be respected and preserved in the hands of those who hold that office in order to be made use of whenever required.

*Article 18*

The Auctioneer of the town the Sequester and the Curator (Trustees) will be supported in the recovering of all outstanding money and be therein protected by the usual officers of justice.

*Article 19*

After this capitulation shall have been signed, the new gate shall be made over to an English detachment of 50 men to which an equal number of Dutch soldiers shall be added, to whom it will be charged that no Dutch soldier may get out and no English one may rush in, and

of those which may concern himself during his management of Cochin.

*Article 15*

Answered in the second article.

*Article 16*

All deserters will absolutely be given over.

*Article 17*

Answered in the fourteenth article.

*Article 18*

All inhabitants who remain in Cochin will be subject to British Laws.

*Article 19*

The gate of the fort of Cochin will be taken possession of by a detachment of British troops tomorrow noon at 12 O'clock. The garrison will be lodged as conveniently as the circumstances will allow until it can be disposed of there about agreeably to the second



next day all the gates will be taken possession of by the English troops and the garrison of Cochin will retire to a certain place and remain there, until their departure for Batavia or Ceylon laying down their arms as usual with the exception of the officers Commanding them who will retain their swords.

*Article 20*

All servants of the Company the Police the Military, the Navy and others in pay will be supported by the English Government until they are taken in English vessels to the place of their destination, either Batavia or Colombo.

*Article 21*

All sick and wounded now in the hospital are to be treated and maintained by the English Government.

The fulfilment of all the above stated articles and the manner of capitulation agreed to are to be faithfully observed and signed respectively by Major Petrie, the Governor Van Spall and the Council of this place.

19th October 1795.

(Signed) J. L. Van Spall.

„ P. J. De Can.

„ I. A. Cellarius.

„ I. H. Scheids.

„ A. Lunel.

„ C. Van Spall.

article. The officers may retain their swords.

*Article 20*

Major Petrie is of opinion that he has not the power to enter into such an Agreement on account of the Hon'ble Company. The last part of this article has been answered in article 2nd.

*Article 21*

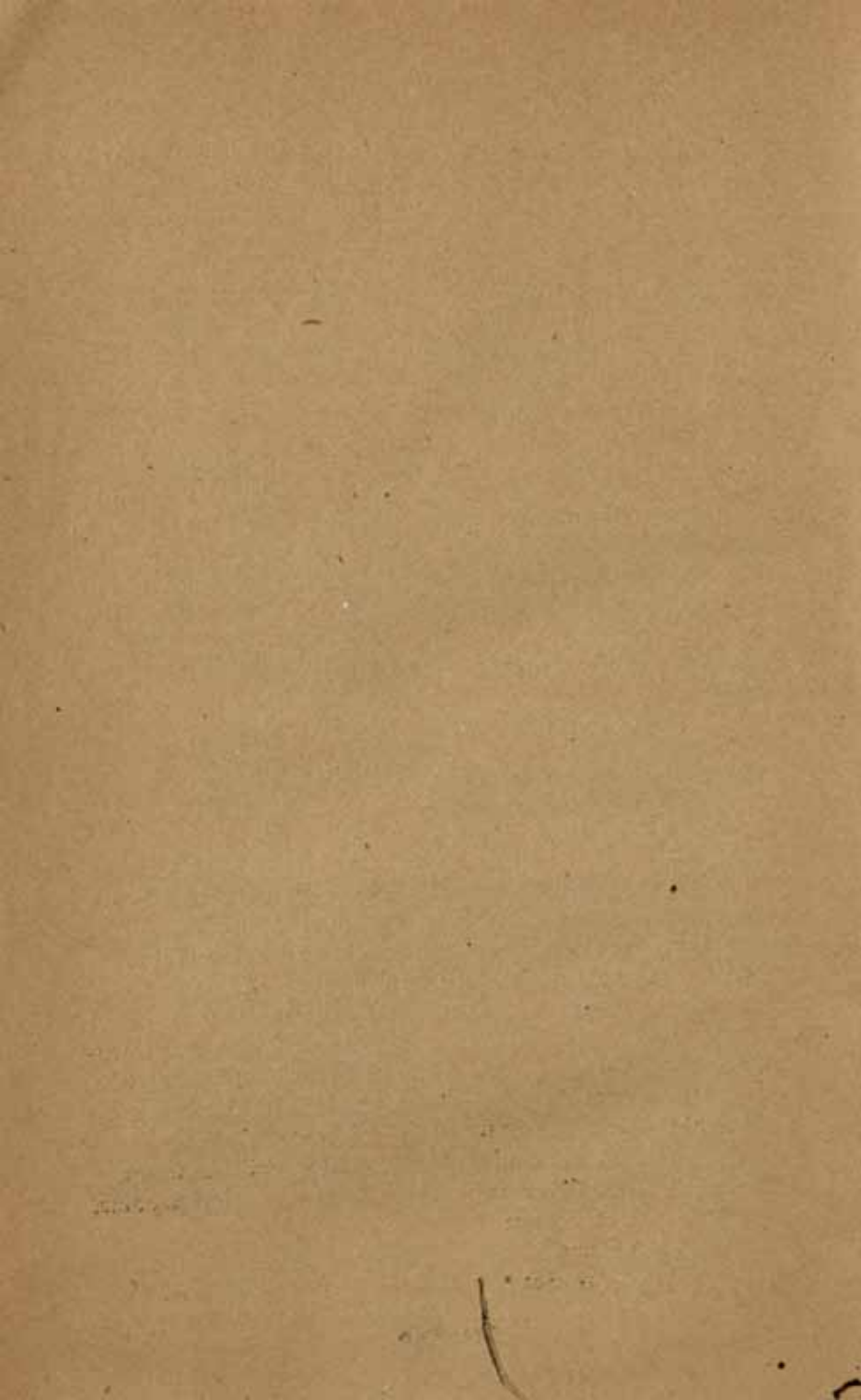
Allowed.

Major Patrie consents to a cessation of arms, until 4 o'clock in the morning at which time Mr. Van Spall should declare whether or not he will accept the afore-mentioned articles of capitulation.

11-30 P.M. 19th October 1795.

(Signed) G. Petrie,

Major, 77th Regiment,  
Commanding.





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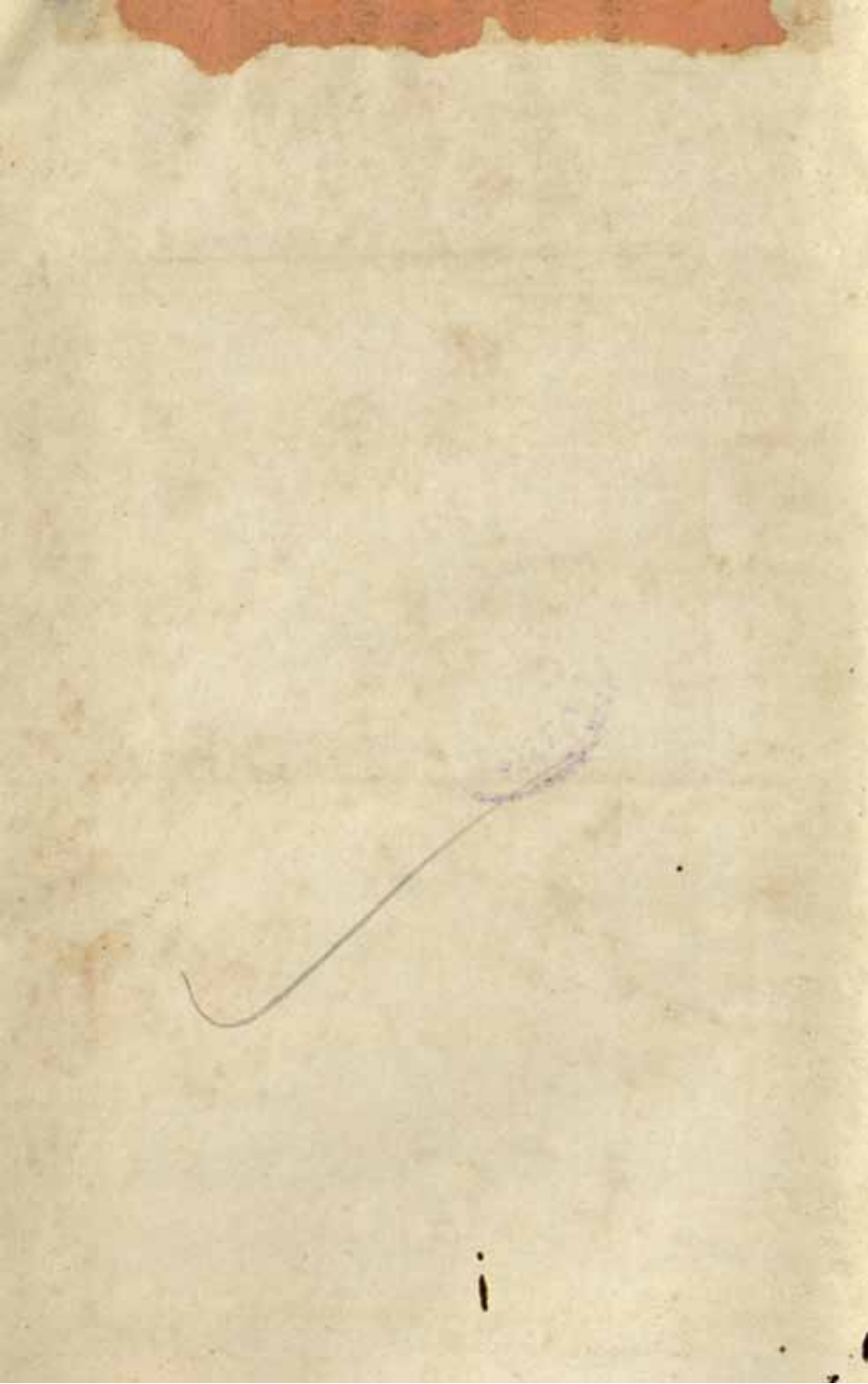
### Zamorin, The

See Calicut.











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